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SNOWDROP'S FORTUNES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"From her Own Lips," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XIV.

ALFRED SCRIVENER was a sharp man, and as difficult to outwit in most instances as any man that ever lived; yet it chanced, with all his sharpness and clearheadedness, that his master managed to hoodwink him so completely in the case of little Snowdrop that he knew literally nothing of what was going on. Mr. Sayers was very anxious that Scrivener should know nothing beyond what he chose that he should, and the fates stepped in to aid him in a remarkable way while the child was at his house, and he was in communication with Mr. Bill Jones.

First, Scrivener himself met with an accident, through slipping on a piece of orange peel in the street, and sprained himself severely enough to make it necessary that he should keep his bed for a day or two; and when he got well enough to get about again and managed

to creep down stairs, and do what writing Mr. Sayers could send him at home, his ailing wife took a sudden turn for the worse, and for many days it seemed to the stricken man as if she were going at last.

So that altogether for nearly a fortnight the ex detective saw and heard nothing of what was going on in his employer's house, and only heard from the servant in the way of gossip when he got round to his duties again of what had happened while he was away. Mrs. Sayers had an old servant who had been with her for years, and who had known Scrivener in the days when he was a celebrated detective officer, and she held him in great respect, in spite of all that had happened to degrade and bring him down.

"So Mrs. Scrivener is better?" she said, sympathisingly, as she made the clerk comfortable by her kitchen fire, and brewed him a cup of tea.

"Yes, thank heaven," he said with a sigh. "I don't know for how long; it's better and worse with her—better and worse. I thought I was losing her last week—I did, indeed."

"Ah, well," the woman said good naturedly,

"you know the old saying, 'a creaking door hangs long'; let us hope it will be so in your case. There's a jelly in the pantry missis said I was to put up for her if she would like it and you did not mind carrying it; she made it herself on purpose."

"She is very good," Scrivener said, gratefully. Mrs. Sayers was something fussy and pompous in her charity sometimes, but she knew what was wanted, and was a cheerful giver. She did not season her gifts with sermons or flavour her good things with any essence of fault-finding; what she did she did cheerfully if with some little ostentation, and Alfred Scrivener and pride had long been strangers.

"How is the missis?" he asked, "I have not seen her for a long time."

"Well she's not very well, I think; leastways she's been worried and frightened I think."

"Frightened."

"Yes."

"What at?"

"Well, not at anything exactly; I only heard little bits about it. Missis told me herself mainly. I'm sure I wish the little girl had been going to stay here; she was a pretty little

thing, and it would have made the house more lively like; it is dull enough sometimes."

"The little girl!" said Alfred Scrivener, trying with all his might to speak calmly, and betray no sign of any agitation. "What little girl?"

"Mrs. Sayers's niece."

"What niece? I never knew she had one."

"Nor I, till she told me. She hinted that the child was—well, a love child—at least, that was what I understood her to say. That she had had a sister that went wrong and was lost, and this pretty little girl was her child. She was a thorough little lady, whatever she was."

"What was she like?"

"Well, not a bit like missis. She had lovely hair and beautiful dark eyes, and she was like a little fairy for dancing about. Master and missis seemed to set great store by her."

"Where did she come from—who brought her?" asked Mr. Scrivener in wild excitement, which he managed to keep from appearing on the surface. "Where is she gone to?"

"Lord, I don't know," the woman replied, "no more than the man in the moon. I never heard a word about her till I came home one evening and found her here; it was my holiday, and it was a good bit past ten before I came in, and missis had made her a bed in the dressing-room, and was sitting beside her. I don't know who brought her. There was no one here when I came in."

"And you never heard anything?"

"Oh, yes, I did. When I took in master's supper he was quite pleasant and chatty—for him. He told me that missis's little niece had come unexpectedly, and that she had been quite upset by it, the child having only been discovered by an accident. I asked if the young lady was going to stay here, and he said no, only for a very little while, till she could be clothed, and so forth. I don't know when master has been so chatty."

"Well?"

"There isn't much more to tell, Mr. Scrivener," the servant said, wondering at his interest. "She stayed about a week, and missis took her about and fitted her out for school. I fancy, by the look of the things that were bought. And then master took her away. Poor little soul."

"Where did he take her?"

"Over the sea, somewhere."

"Are you sure of it?"

"Pretty nearly. Missis said she did not know, and seemed cut up about it when I asked her a day or two since where the little girl was gone. But it's France somewhere."

"What makes you think so?"

The woman laughed, and took a soiled piece of paper from her pocket.

"This," she said; "this was the same day they went from here; went north, Mr. Sayers said, for I heard him. But he turned back again. Anyway, he had his dinner or something on board the boat going across. Look here!"

It was the bill of a meal taken, as she said, on board the boat going across. Mr. Sayers did not know what the sensation of sea-sickness was, and had utilised the time bestowed in the passage in fortifying himself for his further journey.

"Master always tells me to brush the pockets of his coat out when he sends them down," the servant said. "He left this in one of yours; you may have it if you like, Mr. Scrivener. It is of no consequence, I think."

Mr. Scrivener further found out, more by inference than question, that this mysterious child had not been allowed to speak to the servant more than could be helped, and that her name was Esther Craven; at least, that was the name marked upon the new clothes that had been provided for her.

The clerk had not quite decided what his master was about in his dealings with Bill Jones. But there was sufficient suspicion about his proceedings left with regard to this newly-found niece to make him resolve to find out all about it. Bill Jones would be the first person to seek; and he knew enough of that gentle-

man's antecedents to know that he could get what he wanted out of him.

But Mr. Sayers had been wary. Bill had entirely disappeared from his old haunts; the Crow's Nest knew him no more; and in the Old Kent-road and the Borough he was conspicuous by his absence. Mr. Scrivener found a good many of his former friends and acquaintances, most of whom had a lively dread of the ex-detective. Once a thief-catcher was always a thief-catcher in their eyes, and they could not realize that the keen eye and the iron will were powerless now, as far as they were concerned.

He managed to get the information he wanted, or at least as much as there seemed to be to get from a rival showman.

He learned that it was the general opinion that Bill Jones had come into a fortune and gone to America. The fortune was variously estimated by those who knew anything about it; but he ascertained for a certainty that it could not have been less than a hundred pounds that the ex-publican and showman had become possessed of; and he argued that a service that was worth that much to him must have been of very great consequence indeed to his master, Mr. Sayers.

Mr. Scrivener was nonplussed for the present; but he waited and waited, and in due time he came upon another link in the chain of information he wanted to make complete. He heard no more about the niece of Mrs. Sayers, except that she had been sent to school; and he found from a chance bit of paper that his employer had left about, that he had taken a journey to Lord Wrexham's place in the Isle of Wight directly after he had endowed Bill Jones with the fortune which had taken him to foreign parts.

"Gone to report to my lord, I suppose," he said to himself. "What has Mrs. Sayers's niece to do with his lordship, I wonder. Patience, Alfred Scrivener, patience; your turn will come some time. You may have money to make, and a secret to tell, and then hold up your head again amongst your fellow-men. Who knows?" And then he groaned and laid his head on his outstretched arms with a despairing sigh. "Too late—too late," he murmured. "What good would it do to me if I fished out all the mysteries in the universe. Would it give me back my wasted life, and restore my darling to health, or give my lost place again? Fool that I have been to make myself the lacquy of a man with not half the brains that I have misused. I will find out the real history of Mr. Sayers's niece; if it was worth a hundred pounds to Bill Jones, I can surely make it worth more than that to me."

If Mr. Sayers had known or guessed how closely he was watched, and how every scrap of paper he threw into his waste-paper basket was scanned over by his clerk, he would have been more careful to burn all that he threw away. But he never suspected Scrivener; he had told him nothing, and the fact of his being ill when the child was at his house, and never having seen her, made him fancy that he knew and thought nothing about her.

Believing the affair of her abduction a secret between him and Mr. Jones, he went to Overcliffe, and demanded an audience of Lord Wrexham. The Earl and his wife were sitting at luncheon—for a wonder alone—when he drove up in a Ventnor fly.

"There's that horrid man!" exclaimed her ladyship, anything but pleased at his appearance.

"What man?"

"That lawyer you made me be civil to. What does he want?"

"To see me, I expect," Lord Wrexham said, rising hastily, and going towards the door. "Don't go away, Laura, he has seen you!"

"Well, and what if he has?"

"Stay and receive him, my dear. I shall bring him in to lunch."

"And what has that to do with me; I do not want to see him."

"Stay and be civil to him, I beg," the Earl

said hastily; and Lady Wrexham saw by the pained look on his face that she would do well to obey. So she resumed her seat, and was fidgety courteous to Mr. Sayers, who entered fustily, and with much demonstration of being perfectly at his ease, which he was not by any means.

"You have brought me news, I suppose," the Earl said, helping him to some game pie; "or you would hardly have left your business to come down here."

"I have the best of news; it is all over."

"Over?"

"Yes, the danger is at an end; I have had some ugly money business to settle for his lordship," he added, in explanation to Lady Wrexham, who bowed frigidly, as if the intelligence did not interest her in the least. "We stood to lose a good deal but I am happy to say that things have completely turned round, and we have won; it was to bring the news that I came."

"I hope Lord Wrexham has not taken to betting," the Countess said, with a look of disgust. "It is a money transaction of that sort, be good enough to spare me the details; they are repulsive and uninteresting to me."

"Oh, nothing of that sort, I assure your ladyship," the lawyer said, with a disagreeable laugh. "Perhaps I made it seem so by the way I spoke. I have to do with racing people sometimes; and we lawyers have to use all sorts of phrases now and then."

She turned her head away scornfully, and he looked at her with angry thoughts in his heart.

"I'll make you pay for it, my lady," he said to himself; "you shall be civil to me and to Mrs. S. too before I have done with you, proud as you are now."

"If you have done we will go into the library," Lord Wrexham said, seeing that his wife would not help him in the least to entertain their unwelcome guest. And to the library they repaired, leaving Lady Wrexham alone in no very good temper.

"Well," the Earl said, as the door closed upon them, "what have you come to tell me?"

"That it is done; that's all."

"What is done?"

"What you wanted. I have removed the child from your path for ever, and—"

"For ever—you have not murdered her, surely?"

"Nothing so melodramatic, my lord. I have a respect for my own neck, I assure you."

"I believe you are capable of it, nevertheless."

"I must have a stronger motive than this business has presented," Mr. Sayers said quietly. "The young lady is alive, I assure you; she will dance at no more fairs, nor provoke any remarks on her extraordinary likeness to some of your lordship's family."

"Where is she?"

"I will keep that to myself, if you please, my lord. I made no stipulation that I should tell you. You wished her to disappear, and she has disappeared. If two persons are in a secret it is a secret no longer. I will keep mine for the present."

"How do I know you are speaking the truth?"

"Find out the showman and see for yourself. I wonder no tidings of the loss has reached us before this. But he is in an out-of-the-way part of the kingdom, and he has not very much brains, I fancy. We shall hear of him soon, I have no doubt."

"And how much does he know?"

"Nothing; from all I hear the business was managed with so much skill. I sent a trusty messenger, that not a creature was any the wiser. When I got the matter into my own hands, I arranged that no one should even guess there was anything. My wife's little niece came to us on a visit, and she has gone to school. That is the whole story."

"H'm. And you have come to me for payment, I suppose?"

"Yes, my lord, the payment you promised me."

"It is a large sum, but you shall have it. A bargain is a bargain."

"I was not thinking altogether of the money, Lord Wrexham. I want payment of another kind, and you know it."

"I don't think I follow you quite. You are my lawyer—in this matter at least—and it is a money question between us. As long as you are faithful I pay. When you cease to be so your reward ceases also."

"Money is not all, my lord. I want a place in society. I want your wife's friendship for mine. Mrs. Sayers is anxious to see a little of the great world. We can afford that she should do so; and it is Lady Wrexham who must introduce her to the society she is fitted to adorn."

Lord Wrexham winced. He had seen the lawyer's wife more than once, and the very thought of bringing her in contact with his refined and over fastidious wife made him feel cold and sick. What would Laura say to the idea of introducing a woman like Mrs. Sayers to her friends. Why the very name was enough to stamp her as plebeian to a degree, and her husband's coarse familiarity would proclaim his origin the moment he opened his mouth.

"I do not see how that can be managed," Lord Wrexham said, half hesitatingly. He had better have taken the high hand at once, and flatly refused anything of the sort. "Lady Wrexham's visiting list is quite full, and—"

"It will have to make room for Mrs. S—," the lawyer said, disagreeably; "or things might happen that would be unpleasant for her ladyship and your little girl."

"Hush, for Heaven's sake!" the Earl said, turning pale; "don't speak so loud."

"Oh, I don't want to make things disagreeable," Mr. Sayers said. "Only when I have set my heart on a thing I like to have it, and I mean to have this. Go your own way if you like, my lord. Let your wife turn up her nose at mine as she turns it up at me, and I will make your little daughter there a beggar. You know how much you could give her if it were not for her grandfather's will and the fortune he left her."

Very little, indeed; and Lord Wrexham sighed involuntarily as he thought how little. And Mr. Sayers went on—

"Do what I want you to, my lord, and everything shall be safe. Only you and I know of a certain register in a little church, and with my niece safe away at school, and knowing nothing herself, you are safe too."

"Safe!" groaned Lord Wrexham. "I have never felt safe for a moment since I saw her first. Tell me exactly what you want me to do, and I will try and do it."

"Lady Wrexham will know what to do better than I can tell you, my lord. In the first place, we must visit you; as friends, mind—not humble guests. It will do me good for the world to see that I am on intimate terms with you, and—"

"Spare me the details. I will try and arrange it. I must see to Lady Wrexham. She will be unwilling of course—she will not understand."

"You must make her understand that she is to be civil to Mrs. S. and to me," Mr. Sayers said, coolly; and after a little more explanation, and the passing of some money between him and his client, Mr. Sayers took his leave. Lady Wrexham, passing near the library door, heard some of their parting words:—

"Then it's quite settled, my lord?"

"Yes; you may expect an invitation for the twenty-sixth for four days. Our arrangements will not permit of a longer visit at present."

"And it's not to end there—the ladies are to be friends. You understand."

"Of course, of course," the Earl said, with a dark look on his face as he bade his guest good-bye, Mr. Sayers responding with, "Not good-bye, my lord, *à revoir*."

"What have you been doing?" asked her ladyship, whose blood had well-nigh frozen in

her veins at the appalling prospect the few sentences shadowed forth. "Have you been inviting that man here again?"

"Yes; and his wife too."

"Are you mad?"

"I hope not."

"Then I shall leave Overcliffe. I will not stay here to be outraged by a female edition of that vulgar person. I will not be a witness to his low-bred *gaucheries*."

"You will stay, Laura, and entertain him with your other guests. It is necessary."

"Nothing can make a person of that class necessary but dishonour. I will put off every one whom you have asked for that date. I will say that we have a pestilence in the house sooner than see my friends sit down to table with your new confidant."

"I would reason with you if it were any use," the Earl said sadly. "I have long ago found that is waste of breath. Listen to me. I have told you before that our child's future depends on the man's fidelity. If I offend him in any way, he—he has the power in his hands and can—I am not well, Laura—I cannot speak of this now; but you must do what you can to make him welcome, and introduce his wife."

"Many a woman has left her husband and her home for a less cause than this," Lady Wrexham said half to herself. "What if I refuse to stay in your house since you fill it with people like these?"

"You will do as you like, of course!" the Earl replied with white and quivering lips. "I have told you what will be the consequences if you refuse. They will not fall so heavily on you and me as they will on the child."

"Do as you please," she said, angrily. "I am nothing. My wishes are not to be consulted, that is very evident. Go on with your mysteries and secrets, and when they have brought you to misery and ruin, as they will, you will be sorry perhaps that you did not think your wife worthy of your confidence."

"It is too late for confidences now, Laura—too late," was all the answer the Earl made to this speech. "It is your interests I must think of now, my dear."

The next day Mr. and Mrs. Sayers received a note which they showed everywhere. It set forth that Lord and Lady Wrexham requested the pleasure of their company for a four days' visit, commencing on the twenty-sixth of the month. Mrs. Sayers was almost frightened at the prospect, but her husband chuckled over it as a point gained.

"He'll be as good as an everlasting milch cow if I manage him properly," he said; and gave his wife a good round sum to lay out on dresses, &c., for their coming visit.

CHAPTER XV.

PERPLEXING.

"And often times cursing of a fault,
Doth make the fault the worse for the excuse."

SHAKESPEARE.

"Queen, to say the least of it, and my lady does not like it either, I am sure of it; what does it all mean?"

Thus Mr. Fortescue to himself, as he watched Lady Wrexham and Mrs. Sayers strolling along the beautiful terrace of Overcliffe, and making talk as women do manage to do sometimes when they are thoroughly antagonistic. Lady Wrexham had submitted with a very bad grace to the infliction of the exceedingly commonplace Mrs. Sayers's company, and the task of entertaining her vulgar lord. They were worthy people in their way, but utterly out of place in a household like that of their host.

Lord Wrexham winced a thousand times a day at the *gaucheries* committed by the pair; who had no notion of dress, manners, or conversation, as understood by the aristocratic world. And Mrs. Sayers, whose only notion of being well-dressed was to wear the most expensive things that money could buy, at all sorts of unseasonable times, was a laughing-stock to the servants and a perpetual blister to her hostess.

It would not have been so bad if they had been alone, but Mr. Sayers was not satisfied with the invitations to himself and his wife; he insisted on having some one there also that he could be introduced to—some one, as he phrased it, that could "give him a lift afterwards." Lady Wrexham positively refused to ask any of her friends to meet Mrs. Sayers.

"You may do what you please," she said haughtily, and in a freezing tone. "You have not condescended to tell me the reason of your strange behaviour, except the one fact which is self-evident, that you are in this man's power. I have done your bidding and asked the people to stay in our house. I will not insult my friends by bringing them under the same roof with such a pair."

"If you would only trust me, Laura," was all the answer that Lord Wrexham made to this peevish speech. "It is just as difficult for me, my dear, as for you; and it is not upon us that this man's vengeance will fall if we displease him, but on our child—our little Laura."

"Whom I don't believe you care one bit for," she said, spitefully. "I suppose you will be asking me to have this man's children here to be companions for her. It would be all of a piece with the rest of your conduct of late."

"I don't believe he has any; and if he has, Heaven forbid they should ever come in contact with our little darling," his lordship said, sadly. "If you fear any contamination for her, send her away while they are here."

"Thank you, I can take care of my daughter; keep that man from coming near her if you wish for peace. I warn you I will not suffer much more at your hands."

It was no use arguing, as Lord Wrexham knew only too well; so he did what he could. He asked one or two men whom he knew would ask no questions, and at the same time make themselves agreeable even to Mr. Sayers, and Arthur Fortescue being at hand was one of them. They had met more than once since their odd interview on the fairground at Warwick, and no word had fallen from either of them about the little show child who had interested them both so much. They both felt it was a subject better avoided.

It was with no small surprise that Arthur Fortescue saw the guests arrive that he had been asked to meet, and heard Lady Wrexham, in her very finest and coldest manner, express her regret that certain ladies whom she mentioned could not do themselves the honour of meeting Mrs. Sayers. She escorted her guests to her room with stately politeness, and nearly froze the good lady's blood in her veins by the grandeur of her curtsy when she left her to dress for dinner; and when the fine maid came, who was far more splendid than her mistress, and seemed so terribly condescending and contemptuous of all her finery, the lawyer's wife heartily wished herself by her own fireside at Linden Villa. It was all very grand, and would be something to talk about for the rest of her natural life, but it was very miserable.

"They are very worthy people," Lord Wrexham said to Mr. Fortescue; "a little behind the world, perhaps, but estimable in their way; I hope they will not bore you."

"Not at all," the young man replied; and they did not. He was intensely amused at the struggle to appear composed and at ease in their present quarters that was constantly going on in their minds. "It is rather refreshing to meet unsophisticated folks sometimes, and they are of that order decidedly."

"Yes, as far as society is concerned," his lordship remarked. "Mr. Sayers is a very astute man on most subjects, but he has very little time for the cultivation of the polite virtues."

Not a word as to why they were there; and Arthur Fortescue pondered the matter in his mind without coming to any conclusion about it, till an incident happened which gave him a clue. A footman entered the library one day when they were all sitting together—Mr. Sayers very chatty, as was his wont, and Lord Wrexham somewhat silent and con-

strained. The ladies were absent; and little Laura, in charge of her governess, was amusing herself on the lawn in front of the house.

She was a beautiful child; the pride of her mother's heart—graceful, intelligent, and with the carriage of a young princess. She had all her mother's pride, but it was tempered by her father's amiability; and she had judicious training. Lady Wrexham was wont to say that her husband was not solicitous enough about Laura—that he wanted her brought up more like a tradesman's child than one of her own rank. He averred that it was not good for any child, even if she were to be a queen, to be educated with undue notions of rank and station, and that a training of humility and obedience was good for everyone. The governess, whom they had selected with much care, was of his opinion too, and the consequence was that little Laura was not wholly spoiled.

She looked a winsome little fairy as she flitted about under the eyes of her father and his guests near to be well enough in sight, but not so near as to be or to suffer any restraint. Arthur Fortescue made some remark on her beauty, and their host passed it by with a slight word and a sigh.

"Never sigh, my lord, when you look at her," Mr. Sayers said, with a curious laugh. "She'll break hearts enough yet. With her face and her grandfather's fortune she'll have the pull of most of them."

"We need hardly discuss her future," her father replied, shortly, and would have turned the subject, but that a little cry from the child attracted their attention, and made Arthur Fortescue start to the window.

There was a little commotion outside, and a servant came hurrying up.

"What is it?" the young man asked. "Has anything happened?"

"No, sir; it's a person—some people, that is, who want to see Mr. Sayers. They seemed to know our little lady, and one of them caught hold of her."

"And hurt her?"

"No, sir; kissed her," said the man, with such evident horror that Mr. Fortescue could not help laughing.

"She'll get over that damage," he said. "Mr. Sayers is in there; who are the people? Did they give any name?"

"No, sir. They are a queer lot—a man and a woman, and a fellow that seems an idiot. It was he who caught hold of Lady Laura, and a great ugly dog that stood on his head when we tried to get hold of him, and wagged his tail upside down like a Bedlamite."

They came in sight as the man went into the library to apprise Mr. Sayers of their arrival, and to be scolded by his master for allowing them to come into the grounds at all.

"They were in before we knew anything about it, my lord," the man said. "No one knows how they got there."

His description of them was enough. Lord Wrexham knew in a moment who had come to seek him, though how they came to ask for Mr. Sayers he could not think. It was Job Potts and his wife who were advancing towards the house, with Jeremiah and Plato in company, and Arthur Fortescue was in conclave with them already.

"Leave it all to me," the lawyer said, "I will get rid of them for you. People like that are easily frightened; the fellow is simple enough for anything. Don't you show yourself, and they will have no idea you are anywhere near. They never knew your name, did they?"

"Not that I know of."

"They shall be none the wiser for this visit. Don't look so troubled, my lord, you shall see no more of them."

With a slight apology to his other guests, Lord Wrexham disappeared through the library door, just as Arthur Fortescue appeared at the window with Job Potts—the rest of his party, Plato included, remaining at a respectful distance.

"An old friend of mine has a word to say to

you, Mr. Sayers," the young man said, looking the lawyer keenly in the face.

"A friend of yours?"

"Yes."

"I haven't the pleasure of the gentleman's acquaintance," Mr. Sayers said, coldly; "judging from his appearance you select your friends somewhat oddly, Mr. Fortescue."

"I select them for their worth," was the quiet answer. "This is Mr. Sayers, professor—the gentleman you are looking for. I will see you again."

"Thank ye, sir. But I'm not professor now; I've no heart for it. I shall never go on the road again now she is gone."

Job Potts was a sorely altered man since the loss of the little girl who had been not only such a source of profit to him, but such a dearly loved daughter as well. Jeremiah had never really recovered from the effect of the wretched drugging that had been administered to him; and now that Snowdrop was gone, and he was in some sort the cause of her disappearance, his small wife had become smaller than ever, and he was but a little removed from an idiot.

Most people would have put him into the workhouse, but Job Potts and his wife kept him on. He had loved the child, and there was always a hope that she would come back again, though it was a very faint one. For a moment, when he caught sight of little Lady Laura, Jeremiah imagined that he beheld his lost darling; and springing forward with an exclamation of surprise and delight, he had caught hold of the young lady and kissed her, to her governess's great disgust and her own terror. Job Potts did his best to apologize and explain; but he would have made but a poor hand at it if Arthur Fortescue had not come to the rescue, and explained what he at once understood. Still it was awkward, and would make things more unpleasant than they were already about Mr. and Mrs. Sayers. These people had come to see them, and would help to prove more surely than ever how unfit they were for the society of well-bred folks.

The lawyer had never seen Mr. Potts before, and received him with anything but pleasure.

"I don't know you, nor your business with me," he said. "What brings you here?"

"I've come a long way to find you, sir," the showman said; "and you and I would have met before this, but that I have been laid down with illness. I worked myself into it, and that's a fact, with fretting and worrying."

"I don't know what I have to do with it; are you come begging, my good fellow?"

Mr. Sayers's face was a study as he spoke in its innocent bewilderment.

"God forbid!" was the eager reply. "And if I wanted anything in that way, it isn't to you I would come for it."

"I'm glad to hear it, for you wouldn't get it. Then, not being begging, what is it?"

"I want my child, sir."

"Your what?"

"My child—my little Snowdrop! You had something to do with her being taken away from us."

The words were like a slap in the face to Mr. Sayers. He was totally unprepared for them; but not a muscle of his face moved, and he looked Job Potts up and down with a cool stare that perplexed that gentleman not a little.

"Either there is some mistake, or you are an escaped lunatic," he said, carelessly. "I have not the least idea what you are talking about. I should hope you have not been drinking at this time in the day, but it looks like it."

"If it does, it is because I am worn and weak, sir, that's all," the showman said, sadly. "I have not been drinking; and I don't think I'm mad, though I been anigh it more than once lately. Whoever stole our little darling, and took her away, left a bit of paper behind them with your name and address on it. For the love of Heaven, sir, tell us where she is, and what you have done with her! We

are heartbroken, the missus and me, and our life is done with like, since we lost her."

CHAPTER XVI.

No light.

Oh, Heaven, that such companions should unfold,
And put in every honest hand a whip
To lash the rascals naked through the world.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE lawyer's face was like a block of stone as he listened to Job Potts's appeal, and he smiled contemptuously when he had finished. "I don't know what induced you to come to me, my good fellow," he said, "and having done so I must beg of you to go away again. I know nothing of any child, and I certainly have not the honour of your acquaintance; I am afraid you will make that of the police if you come here with such tales."

"Look here, sir, at this bit of paper, dropped in my place by the villain who took her away," the showman said, holding it out eagerly, "with your name and address on it, and—"

"And nothing in the world to warrant such a wildgoose chase, and such a violent intrusion into a gentleman's house. I have not the slightest idea who that piece of paper belongs to. I am a lawyer, and I write many letters; I am not answerable for the hands they fall into. If you have lost a child you have your remedy; the police will help you to find it."

"How can they when she's hidden away, perhaps murdered, poor dear; I don't want to get her back even if she's with good kind people; but lord! what's life without her! I only want to know that she's well and happy, and I think I could bear to go down to my grave and never look upon her pretty face again. It's the not knowing that kills us, and seeing that pretty dear out there so like her, but not with her pretty ways, has made it harder than ever."

The tears were lying on Job's face now, and his voice was breaking into a sob. But the lawyer only smiled again:

"All these heroics have no effect on me," he said, "I have told you that I know nothing; step here, please."

The last words were addressed to the servant who had hung about waiting to see the result of this singular visit. He came forward respectfully. Whatever Mr. Sayers's *gaucheries* might be—and they were many—Lord Wrexham's servants were as respectful to him as they were to his most aristocratic guests.

"See these people off the premises," he said, "and if they are refractory call in the aid of the police. I have no idea what they want or who they are, and I cannot be annoyed with them any longer."

"I beg your pardon if I interfere with your orders, Mr. Sayers," Mr. Fortescue said quietly, with a look in his eyes that the lawyer did not like. "As I told you, I know this man, and I will answer for his going away quietly. If his story is incorrect in any way—with a strong emphasis on the 'if' and a searching look into the impenetrable face of Mr. Sayers—it is not from any untruthfulness of his, but because there is a blunder somewhere, you will allow him to leave if you please without insulting him further."

"I have no wish to insult any friend of yours," was the sneering reply; "but I do wish to save my friend, the master of this house, from any annoyance caused by people who fancy they have a right to question him."

"And who have a right if all were known, I dare say."

"What do you mean?"

"Nothing but a surmise. If there were not some reason in your mind for keeping this man and his lordship apart why should you try to do it? The secret will come out some day, depend on it Mr. Sayers, no matter how carefully you try to keep it."

The slightest possible quiver of the lawyer's dry lip showed that the shock had taken effect, and that there was a secret to be kept, and a mystery to be covered.

"Come with me, Job," the young man said. "I don't think I quite understand what has happened, or why you are here, and looking as you do. Where are you staying?"

"Nowhere, sir; we came here straight from the railway. We found out in London where this gentleman was gone—that's no secret," and Job smiled a sad weary smile as he thought of how every body anywhere near the lawyer's house had been able to tell him that he had gone on a visit to one of the proudest noblemen in the kingdom.

"You have made a blunder, I tell you," Mr. Sayers said, angry beyond measure at the smile that was passing round; for the two or three gentlemen seeing that there was nothing specially private in the conference had gathered round, and were regarding Job with much curiosity and interest. "A very suspicious and vulgar blunder, and you may thank your lucky stars that you have found a champion in this gentleman, who appears to know you."

"Yes, he knows me," Job said quietly; "we have met before, we have. He'll speak for me that I didn't mean anything disrespectful in coming here."

"Yes, that I will," Arthur Fortescue said. "But come away now, Mr. Potts. If there is any necessity for you to see Mr. Sayers again he will be able to talk to you better than now. I will walk to Bonchurch with you, and I daresay you will be able to find a place to stay the night in there—you can do no good stopping here."

"He will get no good if he talks to me for a twelvemonth," Mr. Sayers remarked, turning away. "I should not be so lenient as you seem to be. The only way to deal with tramps and demented people is to set the police to work. I only hope we shall none of us be sorry for your fraternal affection for this person."

"I have told you I know him," Arthur Fortescue said, without a trace of anger for the other's rudeness. "Come, Job; if your story is true and I can help you, be sure I will—I do not quite know what has happened yet."

He walked away with the showman, and the lawyer looked after him with an uneasy smile.

"If he knew as much of the world as I do," he remarked, "he would have more common sense, and be less quixotic. The fellow will victimize him, as sure as I stand here."

"I don't think that," one of the gentlemen said. "Fortescue is not easily imposed on, and he knows the man, he says. It is an extraordinary thing if he has mistaken you for anyone else, Mr. Sayers. Yours is not a common style of face."

"I have never seen him before to my knowledge; he has blundered somehow. If he has not we shall see him again, I have no doubt, and he will remember his visit. I think he should look amongst people of his own class for his child if he has lost one."

"What is his class?"

"He is a — I mean, amongst people of his own position in life," the lawyer answered, just stopping himself from betraying that he knew something of the man—at least, by speaking of his profession, and cursing himself liberally *sotto voce* for the slip. "Who would want to steal the child of such a fellow as that—it is altogether too trumped-up a story."

"Fortescue will give us the history when he comes back," the gentleman who had spoken before remarked. "He has taken up the cudgels for the family, evidently, and gone home with them. They are a curious-looking lot—one of them is surely an idiot, but Fortescue likes eccentric things and people."

Whether he liked eccentric things or not he fiked Job Potts and had gone away with him and his sorrowful-looking wife and Jeremiah and the dog, regardless of any remark that might be made, and heard from the ex-showman all that had happened. Ex-showman in very deed Job was now; his occupation was gone. He had lost heart with his girl, and he

had never been able to get back to his old style of entertainment since his loss.

Job had money, he was not penniless; he had been a saving man; and while "Little Snowdrop" had figured in the bills he had had the opportunity of saving a good deal more than before, so that he and his wife could live for some time, at any rate, till he either found his little girl or had so far got over his grief as to be able to get something to do in his own line of business.

"That man had something to do with it," he persisted. "I saw it in his eyes."

Arthur Fortescue made no direct response to this speech, but only questioned Job very closely about everything that happened about that time, and advised him to be quiet and bide his time.

"Whoever has stolen the child," he said, "has stolen her for a purpose, and will be as cunning as a fox. Let the matter rest, and watch and wait, and I will help you with all my heart."

He would not tell the impulsive showman that he believed with him that Lord Wrexham and his lawyer had something to do with Snowdrop's abduction; he had no proof to offer of such an assertion. He could only sympathize with him and help him a little, and promise him every aid in the future.

"Give me your address," he said, "and if I ever hear anything that bears upon the subject you shall know it at once." And Job gave him an address in London where he said he might always be heard of—not the "Pig and Ploughboy" on Hampstead Heath, for he always mistrusted that hostelry since his loss, believing in his heart that the news of his whereabouts was picked up there, as it was, though not from the landlord. Arthur Fortescue promised to communicate with him at once if there was anything to tell him, and Job thanked him and declared that the sight of him and his kindness had done him more good than anything since the miserable night when he lost Snowdrop.

"Leave that lawyer alone, and come to me if you think there is anything to be done," Arthur Fortescue said, when he left them. "It is like running your head against a brick wall to try and get round a man like that. There is a tremendous bond of something between him and Lord Wrexham, and we shall find out what it is in time."

"You will not be troubled with the man and his family any more, Mr. Sayers," he said to the lawyer when he returned to Overcliffe. "I have convinced him that he was mistaken."

"Thank you; a sensible fellow would have seen that for himself; I suppose he had been drinking."

"He is a very sober man; when I said he was mistaken I did not mean in the sense that you do, perhaps."

"I don't understand you."

"I mean that I made him comprehend how useless it was to appeal to a gentleman of your profession to tell anything that you did not choose should be told," was the quiet reply; and Mr. Sayers thought it best to drop the subject.

"I am sure I am very much obliged to you for taking any trouble about it," he said. "I should have handed the fellow over to the police."

There was a terrible storm when Lady Wrexham came home and heard what had happened.

A low tramp dare to touch her child, to kiss her. Such a thing was never heard of; what were all the gentlemen about that they did not prevent such an outrage? And when she heard in addition, that the people came to see Mr. Sayers' wrath knew no bounds.

"I will not suffer his presence in the house another day," she said to the Earl. "Send him away, and Arthur Fortescue after him if he has such respectable acquaintances. I have borne enough on the score of this man; I will bear no more."

"Laura, be reasonable; there is no harm done; whoever the people were they made some

mistake—Fortescue says so—and Laura was not hurt."

"Hurt? Who said she was hurt? If she had been you would have had to have the man taken up, and then perhaps something inconvenient would have come out. Are you sure it was that man they came to see? Are you not sheltering yourself behind him? Was it you they wanted?"

"I presume they would have asked for me if it had been. I should have had no scruple about seeing them; and if Sayers knew them I don't see why he did not attend to them and get rid of them without all this fuss."

"Fuss? you allow tramps and thieves to come into your grounds and suffer your daughter, Lady Laura Carlyon, to be assaulted and kissed by them—and you call my indignation a fuss? Rupert, what has come to you? you who were wont to be so fastidious!"

"If Laura were nineteen instead of nine; and some man had kissed her, I should have probably made as much of it as you are making now," Lord Wrexham said as quietly as he could command his voice to speak. "The whole thing seems to have been a mistake from beginning to end."

"Any way those people must go."

"They must not."

"They shall; I have borne with them long enough. I will not remain another day under the same roof with them."

"You will, if I give you sufficient reason for it."

"I will not, unless you tell me the whole story of your connection with that man," Lady Wrexham said, with a white set face. "I warn you, Rupert, if I do not know it to-night I will put an end to everything between us, and leave your house never to return!"

CHAPTER XVII.

AN ESCAPE.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage."

RICHARD LOVELACE.

LORD WREXHAM made no direct reply to his wife's angry speech; he only said, "I think you will alter your mind presently, Laura," and left her to herself and her passionate imaginings. She was full of all sorts of jealous misgivings, and fancied there was some woman at the bottom of all her husband's curious conduct; she watched and waited, and tried in every way she could think of—and an angry woman has many ways of finding out things—to get at the heart of the mystery, and she was as far from it as ever.

She idolized her little daughter, and resented what she considered her father's coldness to her. As well she might, for they were living mainly on the little lady's money. The fortune her grandfather left her was something enormous, and had been greatly increased by judicious application of the money. She would be the greatest prize of her season when she came out; and young as she was, her mother was already preparing her for that event—unknown to her husband—by initiating Laura into the mysteries of Court courtesies, and teaching her how to carry herself before Royalty.

No wonder she resented the appearance in her home of people like the lawyer and his wife, and was furious at the *contretemps* that had that day happened. She really meant what she said when she threatened to leave her husband. She imagined herself wronged beyond all possibility of forgiveness on her part, and looked upon herself as the most injured woman alive. She was sitting alone in her morning-room nursing her wrath and resolving to keep to what she had said, and insist on a complete explanation on her husband's part, when, to her amazement and disgust, Mr. Sayers was announced as waiting to speak to her; and the lawyer entered with the air of a man who knows he has a perfect right to walk into any room at will. She rose haughtily, and with a freezing manner.

"Lord Wrexham is not here," she said.

"I am aware of that, your ladyship; it is you I have come to speak to."

"Be good enough to do it through his lordship, Mr. Sayers; you can have nothing to say to me."

"Your ladyship will find I have," the lawyer said, with his ugliest smile. "And as what I have to say will take some little time, I will take a seat, if you please."

She was so utterly astonished at his coolness that she allowed him to seat himself comfortably without saying a word; she could only stare at him and wonder at his impudence.

"His lordship has told me of something that passed between you just now," he said, "and—"

"How dare he!" Lady Wrexham said, with flashing eyes. "How dare he talk to a stranger, and a man like you, about his wife?"

"Dare is a big word to use, my lady. When a man is in a scrape, and his wife won't trust him, nor wait for an explanation, nor do anything like a rational woman, he is apt to turn to the longest-headed man he knows to help him in his trouble. Lord Wrexham turned to me."

"And you have come here as his ambassador?"

"Not at all, my lady. I have come to make a little explanation, that if you had been a sensible woman would have been made long ago. You have taken some notion or other into your head, and I am come to set things right if I can."

"I will not listen to you; let him come himself."

"You had better listen to me, I shall make things clearer than he would; and I want an understanding with you on another subject. We must have different treatment at your hands—Mrs. Sayers and myself—you are not doing the right thing by us."

"I have received you here at my husband's bidding; I can do no more."

"Yes, you can;—you can be civil to us, and you can prevent your servants ridiculing her and turning up their noses at me. But that's not what I came here specially to say. I have a little story to tell you my lady, I think the knowledge of it may help to set matters on a better footing."

"Go on, sir," she said, her heart beating wildly, and her cheeks paling as she looked at him; he looked like a man who would delight in torturing her. "If your tale is of any money losses, it hardly needed such a preface as this, I think."

"Money enters into it of course," he replied coolly, "as it does into most things in this lower world; but the story is interesting without it; shall I go on?"

She motioned him to proceed and listened to every word he had to say, without moving a muscle of her handsome face. Then she turned to him and looked at him haughtily.

"It is false," she said.

"It is true, my lady, every word of it, as true as the stars above us; I hold the proofs of everything I told you in my hands, or I can do so at any time. The secret lies between his lordship and myself, not another living soul knows it. You have only to make it worth my while, and it is safe. But Mrs. Sayers must be known as your friend, and I must have the run of his lordship's places. I don't ask you to be friendly with me if you don't like it, and—by Heaven, she's fainting!"

He was only just in time, for the tall figure which had risen and was standing before him suddenly swayed and tottered, and would have fallen at his feet on the floor if he had not managed to catch it. He laid her on the couch, and looked about him for a smelling bottle or something to revive her, and to his great joy Lord Wrexham opened the door and came in as he was doing so.

"She has fainted, my lord," he said.

"Leave her to me," her husband said. "Poor Laura! poor girl, it has been a bitter blow to her, I am sure, but it was better that she should know it, perhaps."

"It would have been better a long time ago,

if she had not been such a fury of a temper," said Mr. Sayers coarsely, as he left the room. "She'll see fit to be more civil to the people that have helped you out of the scrape now; perhaps."

"I wish we were out of the scrape," Lord Wrexham said, with a sigh; and Mr. Sayers turned back for a moment.

"You are safe," he said, "as safe as if the cause of it all was buried a thousand fathoms deep under the sea. She is where she will not get out again in a hurry, I can tell you."

Lady Wrexham was too unwell to come down to dinner, but appeared in the drawing-room afterwards, and was remarkably civil and kind to Mrs. Sayers, who wondered at the change, and was very thankful for it, but was really sorry for her hostess's white face and dim eyes—an alteration that somehow created a likeness between her and the little girl she had been ordered to claim as a relation. She had been haunted by a likeness to that child somewhere, ever since she came to Overcliffe. Now she fancied it was the Earl himself that was like the child—now the little Lady Laura—and now her ladyship herself seemed to bear a resemblance to the pretty child she would have liked to keep for her own.

Poor little Snowdrop! she was far enough from anyone who had ever been kind to her in her young life, and beating herself against her prison bars like a caged bird, in weary heart sickness. It seemed to her as if the world had all gone from her when the heavy convent door shut out Mr. Sayers and left her alone with that grim woman in the black dress, who led her away and took her to a room where a young girl of not more than seventeen or eighteen was sitting alone with some work in her hand. There was a curious look in her eyes as she rose and greeted the nun—a look of defiance, if the woman had understood it—but she preserved a respectful demeanour.

"Make this child understand that silence is necessary," was the nun's order, and then she vanished.

"Have you come here to school?" the girl asked of Snowdrop, when she was gone.

"I suppose so," was all that Snowdrop could say.

Her manner was strange, and Snowdrop came to know afterwards who she was. She was a daughter of a lady who was still young enough to dread a rival, and who cared nothing for her child. She was to be forced to embrace a religious life and the Sisters of the Sacred Heart had been chosen as most likely to enforce rules, and make a religious out of an ardent spirited girl full of life and energy. How far the plan had succeeded came very soon to be seen.

Eugenie Ravelle restored the little girl to the Sisters in a very little while as silent as they could wish and perfectly obedient. She had made her understand that perfect submission was the most likely quality to win for her any indulgences, and counselled her to be patient and wait for what time might bring forth. They had not been allowed to talk long, but they would have other chances, Eugenie said.

Snowdrop was a reticent child, and the elder girl found it out, and took her in some sort into her confidence as to what she was going to do. She would run away, she said, and do what she could. She would rather die in a ditch than be the machine that her mother and the nuns wanted to make of her. There was surely something in the world for her to do; and if not, why there was the river; and she shrugged her shoulders in a careless fashion that made Snowdrop's blood run cold.

"Give me something of yours, child," she said, "and I will wear it and show it; and if ever I come across anyone who knows and loves you—and stranger things than that have happened before now—it will be a sign to them that you are alive, and a token where you are; only hear all in silence. Don't show in the place that you have any will—any life beyond what they order for you; if you do it will be worse for you."

Snowdrop thought her words wild, and that she would not carry her threat into effect. But she gave her a curious locket that she wore round her neck, and which had not been taken away from her, as it had no sort of beauty about it. Mrs. Potts had given it to her a long time ago, and she had had it many years. It was the only thing she had that hadn't been confiscated at Mr. Sayers's house, and she parted from it with many secret tears. It might be the means of bringing her into contact with her dear friends again; and on the other hand Eugenie might lose it, or care nothing more about it when once she had got outside these gloomy walls, if ever she did.

She did get out. There came a night when Snowdrop felt her kisses on her cheek as she lay in her narrow little bed, and was conscious of a dark form gliding softly away from beside her.

She made no sound, for she understood what it meant, and she said nothing when there was a hue and cry the next morning, and the news ran through the place that Eugenie Ravelle was missing.

She had vanished in the night in the midst of a storm of rain and hail, and left nothing but an unlatched door to tell how she had managed to elude the vigilance of the Sisters.

(To be continued.)

SWEET INISFAIL.

A ROMANCE.

By the Author of "The Mystery of Killard, &c."

CHAPTER XXV.

FAIR PLAY.

THERE WAS NO ONE in the office when Frederick Manton read Burkett's telegram to O'Gorman's employers. The first thing he said to himself was, "I could have given the fool twenty points from start to finish." Then as he was despatching the message he began to realize the fact that, while the winning of O'Gorman's money had put new blood into his veins, it was extremely likely O'Gorman's suicide would get him into trouble. There would, of course, be an inquest; there would also, of course, be an inquiry at the inquest into the motives which had induced the young man to make away with himself. It would come out that he had spent the whole evening gambling with him—Manton—and that Manton had won all the money he had with him. That would alone make Clonmore unpleasant for the winner. It would seem to the simple people of that place that Manton had had something to do with the young man's death; that he was, in fact, accessory to it. John, the marker, would no doubt be summoned, and tell impartially what had occurred. Then there was the awkwardness of his living in Clonmore and being employed by the company under a false name. When he was sworn at the inquest what name should he give? If he said he was Frederick Manton, in all likelihood he would get into trouble over the old telegraph swindle. If he said his name was Edward Pryce he added perjury to the list of his crimes. It was more than likely that in any case the telegraph authorities would hear of the matter, and that if no present displeasure were visited upon him, his career as a telegraph official would be blocked.

There was, however, one consoling fact in the case. He had won £155, and if the worst came to the worst, and he were dismissed from the service, he could with this money and his own fifty go betting on the turf in England or the board of green cloth abroad. All this, of course, supposing the old fraud did not turn up against him.

Next day the inquest was held. All the facts were fully gone into. Morrissey, the proprietor of the billiard-table, swore he did not know gambling ever went on there, or was going on there the night in question. As a matter of fact, he was not in the billiard-room that whole day or night. He had given instructions to

the marker never to allow gambling in that room. The marker, as a sign of his displeasure and disapproval, had been discharged the moment he had become aware there was gambling that night. He, in the interest of his room, ventured to say there was not a better-conducted one in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. He had no licence to sell drink of any kind; drink of no kind was sold that evening. He had no licence of any kind for the room; a licence was not necessary. Play very seldom went on later than eleven o'clock. He was profoundly sorry for what had occurred, and greatly shocked to find that his room had had anything to do with so melancholy an event.

The evidence of the marker was simply a repetition of the events already recorded.

When the telegraph clerk was called, he answered to the name of Edward Pryce; he swore his name was Edward Pryce. He detailed the events of the evening in almost the same words as the marker; and when asked whether he was a fair match for the deceased, he swore he thought they were about equal players, but that towards the end he had given deceased points. He also explained that upon the last game he had not only given his adversary additional points, but had given him the odds of two to one, so that had O'Gorman been successful in that one game no money beyond a few shillings would have been lost or won.

The coroner asked the witness if he thought the marker a good judge of the game.

Edward Pryce swore he thought the marker an excellent judge of the game.

Upon this the coroner recalled the marker and asked him:—

"What do you think were the points between the deceased and Mr. Edward Pryce in a sixty-three game?"

"Fifteen to twenty," answered the boy at once.

At this there was an uneasy movement among the jurymen and a few of the outside public who had found access to the coffee-room of the South Tipperary Hotel, in which the inquest was being held.

When the coroner came to sum up the evidence he dwelt at some length upon the evil of gambling, and particularly among people whose circumstances did not allow them to lose considerable sums of money without misappropriating the funds of their employers. He said:—

"The evidence of the witness, Edward Pryce, was quite satisfactory up to the point at which the relative skill of the two players came in question. Then he swore that they were about equal, but that if there was any inequality, it was balanced by witness giving deceased five points out of sixty-three for several games; and ten points out of sixty-three on the final and most important game. Now the billiard-marker swore that there were fifteen to twenty points difference between the two players, and although the evidence so far is not conclusive—one man swearing one way, another the other—there is one fact which confirms me in the belief that the marker's statement is more near the truth than Pryce's. For we find that while the unfortunate man, whose death has brought us together, won all the earlier games without exception, Pryce won all the later ones without exception. This, to me, gentlemen, appears to show that Pryce played deliberately to lose at first, and deliberately to win at last. There is much more than may at first seem to us in the observation of the marker, that if Pryce wished the deceased to win back his money, it was unnecessary for him upon that last and most important game to refresh himself by the application of cold water. However, gentlemen, we have nothing to do with this matter. We are assembled here solely for the purpose of determining how the dead man came by his death, and I do not conceive that you will have any difficulty in determining that issue."

In a few minutes the jury found their verdict. It was simply to the effect that the

deceased had committed suicide while suffering from temporary insanity, owing to loss of money at billiards.

The local papers contained a long account of O'Gorman's death and of the inquest; but the Dublin papers did not devote more than a few lines to the occurrence. It so fell out that at the time of the suicide Fitzgerald and George Manton were not in Clonmore. The latter was on his promised visit to O'Grady, the former on business in Dublin. It was part of George Manton's scheme for the restoration of his health to keep as much as possible away from all topics of ordinary interest or excitement; hence he read no newspaper, and the first he heard of the suicide at the hotel was from O'Grady one day at dinner.

When he got the newspapers and read the account, a thrill of horror went through him. This wretched brother of his had again got into disreputable notoriety. Again it was by gambling, and again the gambling had been unfair. What would be the upshot of all this? Was this brother of his destined to ruin him? Was there any mercy in fate?

Another man, when he saw the account of the suicide and the verdict, took a very different view of the matter. He was at that time sitting in his back office in Rook-street. He had had a very dull time in business since his meeting with George Manton. No solvent men came to him to borrow money at eighty per cent. He had an inquiry for a loan of a thousand pounds, but as the candidate borrower would pay no more than twenty per cent. Mr. Joseph Isaacs had turned that business out of his office.

When he read the account of the tragedy at Clonmore, he jumped up and called to the boy in the outer office. "Tim, my good boy, come here." When the boy had entered he said to him, "Tim, do you know where you could get me a nice cheap pack of cards?"

"Yes, sir," said the boy, "just round the corner."

"Well, Tim, put on your hat, and bring me back a nice cheap pack, and we'll have a game here all to ourselves."

He handed the boy some money, and when he was alone got up and stamped about the room and clapped his hands, crying, "Capital! capital! capital!" Then he sat down and wrote something on half a sheet of paper.

When the boy came in with the cards he gave him the half sheet of paper, and told him to gum it on the front door, and then close the door. The boy did so.

"Now come here, Tim," said the hunchback. "I want you to teach me how to play cards, and when you have taught me we'll play a game for a shilling, and you shall have the shilling whether you win or lose. But you young heathen scoundrel, if you dare to cheat me, I'll brain you with that poker there, and you'll be wallowed for ever hereafter with sulphur and flames and things for deceiving a good, kind, dear master like me."

The boy, who was a feeble, precocious-looking youth, looked at his master and said, "I would not think of cheating you, sir."

"Very well, then, sit down," said the master.

And while the two got ready, the first caller had been confronted by the shut door, and had found written on the half sheet of paper a notice to the effect that Mr. Joseph Isaacs had gone to the country for a few days, and that all letters dropped in the box would be forwarded to him.

"The most of red and the least of black wins," said the boy.

"Upon my faith, Tim, I never thought 'twas in you. Go on."

"And then over and above the spot cards is the five; and then the knave and then the ace of hearts, and then the ace of trumps, and then the king, and then the queen."

As the boy spoke he singled out each card mentioned. Isaacs knew the cards by name, no more. The boy had laid each card down, face up, in the order of its value, and for a long

time the dwarf sat motionless, contemplating these.

"Tim," said he at last, "what wages do I pay you?"

"Seven-and-six," said the boy.

"So help me you shall have eight shillings after the first of the month, and I won't ask you to buy either the blacklead or the ink out of your own money any more."

"Thank you kindly, sir," said the boy, gratefully. The advance of salary was not much, but the remission of the blacklead and ink duties won Tim's heart.

"You may go on now, Tim. I know all about those," said the dwarf, pointing with his long lean forefinger to the suite of cards turned up in front of him.

"And the way you play is this. You shuffle the cards first, this way, then the man on your right cuts, then you give the man on your left two cards or three cards, as you like, and so to all the rest round the table, ending with yourself. This way, supposing four were playing"—the boy dealt four hands of three each, then to each heap of three he added two more—"when all the men are served you turn a trump. That's the trump, the knave of diamonds."

"The knave of diamonds, by all that's holy," cried the dwarf, profoundly interested.

"Now we'll pretend that I gave out only two hands, and we'll play the game between us. You have the lead. The first thing you have to do is to look through your cards and see if you have the ace of diamonds."

"And see if I have the ace of diamonds," repeated the dwarf, in a tone indicating intense concentration. "I have the ace of diamonds," he said at length, looking up at the boy.

"Then," said Tim, "you can rob the knave of diamonds."

Isaacs threw down his cards furiously, sprang out of his chair, ran round the table, and seized the pallid precocious boy with his long talon fingers by the throat. "You cursed young blackguard! You son of maledictions! How do you know that? Who told you that? Have you been listening at the keyhole while I've been talking to myself?—you feeble, foul imp of darkness!"

"Oh!" groaned Tim. The grip of the other prevented him from saying any more.

"Speak, or by the Lord I'll throttle you," cried the infuriated money-lender.

"I can't," gasped Tim.

"Then I'll make you, if I had to kill you first, you white-faced spawn of the Coombe." But, as though to give his words the lie, he released his grip.

"I only said, sir," said the boy, his eyes round with terror, "that you could rob the knave of diamonds, as you had the ace in your hand."

"And it was only about the card you were talking, Tim," said the dwarf, falling back, and looking at the boy through half-closed, suspicious eyes.

"That's all," whimpered Tim. "And I couldn't give you a better hand if I tried than to put the ace of trumps in your fist and turn up the knave. I couldn't do more for you, sir, if you were my own born mother, and I had the bulking of the cards for six deals."

By this time the money-lender had reached the opposite side of the table and placed himself once more in his own chair.

"Tim," said he, "you're a wonderful boy. There's the shilling for you before we play the game, and I'll give you a shilling every month to spend how you like. I can't afford to give you any more. They're cruel hard times. Upon my word they are, and it's only by the mercy of Heaven and your having a good, kind, dear master that you ever get any wages at all. For, Tim, you're not worth any. You're not worth more than half-a-crown a month of any man's money, that would look for profit. But go on anyway. Go on and tell me about the ace of diamonds robbing the knave. That takes my fancy. Tim, that takes my fancy, as a new billy-cock hat would take yours."

(To be continued.)

DREGS AND FROTH.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

CHAPTER XVII.

AGAIN that solemnly earnest, penetrating look was fixed so uncomfortably upon his face. "My visit was intended for Mrs. Cochrane. When will she return?"

"Probably never. You know perhaps how unfortunate she has been."

"Unfortunate?"

"Yes, in her marriage."

"Madame!"

"What is the matter?"

The words "I am her husband" were on the very eve of utterance when he closed his lips, and looking keenly into the artist's face asked: "Have you seen Mr. Cochrane, madame?"

Miss Tregarthen shook her head, and, glancing upwards with a smile, said, "There is no such person."

"Oh! Is she then Miss Cochrane?"

"You seem to know very little about the lady you wish to see, sir."

"Perhaps—and yet I have reason, good reason, for suspecting that this very lady is my wife, and that you, madame, know it. If you do so, you do not know my feelings, or—being a lady—you would surely not make sport of them."

"Wait, Sir John Weeldon; for if you acknowledge yourself my poor friend's husband I shall know you for that base, cruel monster who sent a beautiful woman—a sane woman—who had loved him to a lunatic asylum, and kept her there for many months."

Sir John's face glowed with a dusky red, his eyes were fierce with anger, and his voice tremulous as he replied, haughtily:—

"I am not mistaken then—you have hidden her from me, knowingly, Miss Tregarthen."

"No, Sir John Jenkins, you are not mistaken."

He started again, and, regarding her with a strange expression, asked:—

"Why do you call me Jenkins?"

"Because I believe that you are the son of a poor old couple who live not far from here, in a wretched hovel down by the sea—an old man of eighty who wins his bread by the hardest labour, and a poor old woman whose kind, true heart has for more than thirty years yearned for an ungrateful, worthless son, who never spared a penny from his great wealth to lessen the cares and hardships of his parents' weary lives."

Miss Tregarthen spoke at first with some trepidation, but her concluding words were uttered firmly and distinctly, and with her eyes fixed sternly on those of the alderman, who shrank back ashamed and astounded, covered with confusion.

"Miss Tregarthen," he said at last, "you are insulting me."

As he spoke his eyes were fixed earnestly on the face she had been painting; and, reading in his expression that he recognised it with unmistakeable emotion, she said:—

"I can see, too, that you have not forgotten your mother's face."

"My mother's!"

"Yes, sir, the model for this sketch was poor old Elizabeth Ann Jenkins, your mother."

With a smile that was full of mockery and bitterness he said, as he rose from his chair, "Madame, you do me honour; but I will no intrude upon you any longer. It will be my better plan, perhaps, to see either your father or Doctor Carew."

"Papa will be home presently to dinner, and it is not more than three miles to Doctor Carew's house."

"Thank you!"

His last glance, as he retired abruptly from the room, was fixed upon the picture of his mother.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Do you know Dr. Carew's house?" asked the alderman, as he placed his foot upon the

step of the chaise preparatory to resuming his place under its spacious hood.

"Ees, sur," replied the driver, touching his hat.

"Take mother."

The driver, as he mounted to his seat, came to the conclusion that Sir John had been offended in the Manor House—he looked flushed and angry, and spoke so sharply.

Again the rain began to fall as they drove away. The landscape improved as they went, trees became more abundant, the farms and cottages nearer together and more numerous. The roads—mostly down-hill—ran between hedgerows, fields, and meadows; here and there a church tower, or an old manor-house cropped up amongst the foliage; and presently they rattled into Hellar, pleasantly situated on the slope of a steep hill, and then stopped at the door of Dr. Carew's house.

The doctor was at home, and in his surgery, to which Sir John was promptly introduced; and his glance—as he turned from disconsolately contemplating the rain and gloom outside to look at the alderman—was one of sharp and critical investigation.

"Good afternoon, my dear sir," said Sir John, in a loud voice, with imperfectly assumed cheerfulness. "Not hearing anything more from you with regard to Mrs. Cochrane, I have taken a very long and somewhat comfortless journey for the pleasure of becoming personally acquainted with you."

"Good afternoon," replied the doctor curtly, "take a seat, Sir John."

The visitor being seated, the doctor said:—"Mrs. Cochrane has gone away from Tregarthen Manor House."

The tone in which this was said brought a flush to the alderman's dark face. There was something of sly triumph in it. He compressed his lips tightly and looked fierce. "Do you know where she has gone?"

The doctor replied—truthfully enough—that he did not.

"I shall find her."

"Possibly," said the doctor gravely.

"You convinced yourself, I suppose, that she was insane, and therefore considered it unsafe to leave your patient in her charge. She left, I presume, on that account."

"On the contrary," said the doctor; "I convinced myself that she was perfectly sane."

"Thank you, sir, I am very glad to hear it. Did she confess that her real name was Alice Weeldon?"

"Her real name is, I believe, Alice Jenkins."

The alderman looked troubled and dismayed.

He said bitterly, "I might have spared myself the fatigue and trouble of this long, dreary journey if you had only been kind enough to tell me all this in a letter, sir."

As he spoke he arose and drew on a glove, as if to depart.

"Excuse me, sir," said the doctor, "but before you go, permit me to ask a question or two in my turn. I did not object to answer your questions, remember."

"Well, sir."

"Mrs. Weeldon has a sister, I think. Her name is Clara Grant. Is it so?"

Sir John gazed at him silently for a full moment.

"Is that a trap?" he asked sarcastically.

"Sir! I was waiting for a reply, not a question."

"I decline to answer."

"And you have doubtless a very good reason for doing so. That unfortunate young woman was last seen in the streets of London, singing songs for bread. Do you know that, Sir John?"

"You are insolent, sir, and I decline to answer." As he said this he opened the door.

"I don't think, Sir John, you did a wise thing when you came into Cornwall."

The doctor laughed; the door was banged, and Sir John, hurrying from the doctor's house, sprang into the chaise with a face of undis-

guised fury, muttering to himself more than one or two oaths.

"Drive me to the best inn in the town; you can put up the horse there."

At the best inn—the Red Lion—Sir John ordered and sat moodily down to an ill-cooked meal, for which he had neither taste nor appetite. After it, he smoked and drank a little too freely. The rain continued to fall heavily.

Again and again Sir John thought of all he had sacrificed upon the altar of his ambition.

He seemed to have isolated himself from every source of real happiness; and content, to increase and multiply at every step a whole host of irritating and petty annoyances, none of which he deserved, as he believed.

Look at the day he had just passed through. Could anything be more utterly wretched and disappointing?

He was seeking his wife, with the best intentions in the world, desirous only of forgiving and being forgiven, and he had been received with nothing but contumely, insults, and opposition.

Thirty years of absence from his poor, ignorant, obscure parents had not sufficed to blot him out of their remembrance or destroy the chance of his being identified as their son.

He was most painfully, despairingly puzzled and bewildered.

And then how bitter it was to find that he could not even cut himself free from this horrible young woman who had so hideously disgraced both herself and her family—this Clara Grant!

The alderman pitied himself most sincerely as a brave, true man, a good man, a great man, a man whom all the world might justly admire and esteem, and yet withal a man so utterly miserable and unhappy.

The more he drank the more he pitied himself; and at last it was with difficulty that he restrained himself from shedding tears over himself—his fate was so lamentably cruel and undeserved.

Even the greatest of conquerors have these hours of weakness and despondency. We have it upon record how that Napoleon the Great was ashamed of his origin when he had attained the dignity of a French general, and was savage with that poor, honest, simple-hearted countryman of his who said, "Do me the favour to speak in our dear native tongue," and, answering him loudly in French that those near might hear and suppose him no Corsican, asked indignantly: "What do you mean by this insolence, fellow?" holding up to scorn and laughter the gift of "a few ells of cloth to make him half-a-dozen shirts," sent in kindness by poor, sympathising Madame de Saint Ange, because she knew his poverty.

You may know, too, that the great little conqueror never forgave the honest Corsican who brought the cloth, because he boldly replied:—

"Eh! I have seen the day, and not long ago either, when half of this piece of cloth would have been gladly accepted by your mother, General Buonaparte, to make shifts for your sisters."

In a like spirit this Napoleon of Commerce, this great and honourable conqueror in the great battles of trade, looked back upon his origin, and detested and resented the insolence of those who dared to call attention thereto.

The huge red moon was rising slowly up into the dark-grey mist of the evening when the old hooded chaise was once more brought to the door of the Red Lion to take the alderman back to Wauceston.

But before leaving he called for pen, ink and paper, and taking from his pocket-book half-a-dozen bank-notes, enclosed them carefully in an envelope with a sheet of paper, on which he wrote:

"Bank of England notes, five in number, each for fifty pounds, sent for John William and Elizabeth Anne Jenkins, from their long-lost son, John."

These he carefully put into his pocket-book before resuming his place in the chaise.

(To be continued.)

REST AT LAST.

THE path thy feet have trod so long,
Has led thee through the gate at last,
That separates this busy throng
From those who have its portals passed.
Thy days were many, thou wert old,
Twice forty-four the bells have tolled.

The child upon its mother's knee
You saw, and saw its wedding-day.
Its manhood's prime you lived to see,
And saw that manhood's prime decay;
And still you lived, and saw it hid
At last beneath the coffin-lid.

You saw a nation in its youth,
Defeat an old and warlike land.
You saw it later, filled with ruth,
And brothers fighting hand to hand.
You lived, and peace at last once more
You saw proclaimed from shore to shore.

And then the sands within the glass
Of that long day were nearly run.
You saw the flying moments pass—
Those golden grains that, one by one,
Were falling, and you knew the last
Would soon be added to the past.

Your footsteps near and nearer drew
Toward the swiftly setting sun;
The shadows long and longer grew,
Then gently blended into one.
Your long day's work was done at last,
The sun was set, the harvest past.

A. B. P.

TO THE WORLD GUILTY.

CHAPTER XI.

FACE TO FACE ONCE MORE.

"WHERE is Hyacinth?" asked Miss Philippa, about five o'clock in the afternoon. The question was addressed to Louis and Gwendolen as the elder lady entered the drawing-room. Both looked up, Louis from a novel, Gwendolen from some crewel work.

"In her room, is she not?" replied the latter, directly.

"No, I have just been there."

"Perhaps she is out," suggested Louis.

"Then she ought not to be," said Miss Philippa; "roaming the country by herself! She is far too independent."

"Maybe she is not by herself," said Gwendolen, rising. "You need not stare at me, Louis; most likely the letter that came last night was from Lochisla—the writing on the envelope disguised, of course—and she has gone to meet him."

"Scandalous!" burst from Miss Philippa, in a kind of gasp.

"Scandalous!" repeated Louis, flushing high, as he flung down his book and rose abruptly.

"Be reasonable, Aunt Philippa; you know how I feel—what I think about Lochisla; but it is monstrous to suppose that Hyacinth will cut off all friendship with him. Whatever wrong he has done us (as she said), to her he was a friend and protector—the worst friend she could have now; but we cannot expect her to see that—all at once, at any rate. If she is brought to see it, it will be by influence, not coercion. Remember we have no power over her. Child as she is she is her own mistress; and she might go and live alone if she chose. She must not be reproved or interfered with, or we shall only drive her into the mischief we wish to save her from."

Louis spoke the last words with a tone of authority, which Miss Philippa fully recognized. It was not often that the master of Stanhope Lea asserted himself as head of the house, but when he did everyone about him knew that he meant it. But even if Miss Philippa had felt disposed to disregard authority, Louis's reasoning appealed powerfully to her own. Worldly motives were touched, nor were humane motives entirely inoperative. Hyacinth was very

young and very beautiful; she had no relatives but her mother's kinsfolk, and if she left their protection her future path would be a very perilous one. What influence could then save her from Lord Lochisla?

"You are right," said Miss Philippa, in a softened manner; and Gwendolen added:

"Certainly right." She said no more, but resumed her seat and her work, though in the latter were not a few wrong stitches, which she presently picked out with unwonted impatience. Yes, far better that Hyacinth should remain at Stanhope Lea; after all, the man who had so completely bowed to the world's verdict ten years ago would not brave it now, and offer to any woman a branded name; nor would Hyacinth accept a position so equivocal. Besides, why assume that Lochisla loved the girl? Might he not still retain the memory of his first love; might he not yet—

"Gwendolen," said her brother's voice, and she started violently and looked up; she had not noticed that both Louis and Miss Philippa had left the room, and the former had returned.

"It must be as we thought," Louis added. "Justine says that Hyacinth told her long ago she was going out, and would be home to dinner."

"I shall say nothing," Gwendolen answered, drily, "and Hyacinth is not to blame."

"Lochisla is," said Louis, sternly; "and I only hope that I shall not meet him, for I shall not spare him the truth. For four years he has not seen the child; why disturb her peace? How is it?" said the young man through his teeth, "that Heaven gives to some men every gift but the sense of honour?"

"Yet," said Gwendolen, with almost a sneer, "in the German war, Count Cameron's honour was held in highest esteem; his pledge was never doubted, and no outrage was ever charged upon his Uhlanes."

"Aye, aye; so there are men by the thousand who would not utter a lie, nor cheat at cards, but will rob a man of his wife without compunction. And they talk of their 'honour'!"

He took up his book again and flung himself in an arm-chair. *Certes*, Louis Stanhope was only just—in the abstract. The world's code of honour is strangely elastic; but was he just to Lochisla? According to his means of judging—yes.

When Hyacinth returned at seven o'clock no questions were asked her; and though she saw at once that the reason for her absence was divined and disapproved of, no such disapproval was openly displayed. Miss Philippa, indeed, was less cold than usual, as if she feared being misunderstood.

The next morning Louis proposed going up to Tattersall's for the purchase of the horse, and Hyacinth showed herself sufficiently careless and lavish with regard to money, giving him *carte blanche* as to price.

"And what name is she to have, Hyacinth?" asked Louis, as he bade adieu.

"I hardly know. I must think about it; perhaps I will call her Lenore."

"Some legendary German name, of course. Well, good-bye, Hyacinth."

Louis departed, and Gwendolen asked Hyacinth what she was going to do that morning.

"I don't know. I shall go and look at the church, I think."

"Shall we go together?"

"Ah, yes; but you will not come out of mere politeness. You must not treat me as a guest."

"No, Hyacinth. I should like to go."

They were soon ready, and sallied forth, and a few minutes' walking brought them to the church.

It stood in the midst of an extensive and picturesque churchyard, which, at the rear, sloped down to the river. The church was always open, so Gwendolen lifted the door-latch and they entered.

It was a fine old building of the Norman style of architecture, and Hyacinth thought it looked like a church "at home," with its high pitched altar, candles, and flowers.

"And there used to be the Lady Chapel," she said, as she paused before the chancel step and turned to Gwendolen, "and here St. Joseph's. And you have no other shrines? But I thought you would have the Madonna's; that is strange!"

"To you, perhaps, it is, Hyacinth. See, here is what we call the Monument Chapel—only Stanhopes are buried in it. There used to be an altar to Saint Benedict in old times, but of course that has been destroyed."

"What a pity!" said Hyacinth softly; and with reverent step she passed into the little chapel where slept so many generations of her forefathers. Quaint knights and ladies, and quaint inscriptions in Latin, which Hyacinth read with ease—and Gwendolen made her read some of them aloud—to hear the musical foreign Latin. "I used to know something of the language," she said, smiling, "but I could not follow the sense with your pronunciation."

"Well, I once heard an Englishman in Paris quote some Latin, and I could not understand him." The progress through the chapel was slow. Hyacinth's interest in the tombs was intense, and she listened attentively to the stories Gwendolen related of some of the departed worthies of the family.

So they came to the more modern tombs, and stopped at length before a beautiful white marble monument, and Hyacinth read the inscription—in Latin, like the rest—which recorded that beneath that marble rested Francis Louis Stanhope, of Stanhope Lea, and Jennifer Rhoda Stanhope, his wife; the date of the latter's death showing that it must have occurred many years before that of her husband—when Louis was a baby and Gwendolen only a young child.

"Poor mamma!" said Gwendolen, with a sigh.

"Do you remember her, Gwendolen?"

"So vaguely that I hardly know whether it is herself I remember, or only fancy so because I am familiar with her picture. She was an invalid for a long time before her death—more than a year—and could not have endured our presence; we were never allowed to see her. She died very suddenly at last, or perhaps I might have seen her."

"I think," said Hyacinth, slowly, "if there is one thing above all others that I wish, it is to have known my mother."

Gwendolen looked at her. "I only saw Aunt Amy once," she said. "I remember her as very pretty and gentle. I don't wonder Marcus Vernon loved her. I sympathize with your feeling, to some extent. I have often thought that I should like to have known my mother; and yet, perhaps, it may be as well as it is."

How well one day Hyacinth remembered those words! They struck her now, and she said, inwardly, "Maybe it is as well." If Gwendolen had known her mother would she have been able to cherish as her likeness the pale yellow-haired woman whose picture hung in the dining-room at Stanhope Lea?

As Gwendolen spoke, she turned aside and sat down on a low stone bench jutting out from the wall, and presently Hyacinth came and seated herself by her cousin.

"There is a lovely view from the tower," said Gwendolen, "if you care to mount so high."

"I shall like to go very much—and you?"

"No. I shall wait for you here, or in the churchyard. I am not very fond of steep turret stairs. But don't go just yet." She laid her hand suddenly on Hyacinth's, and asked in a quick low tone, her cheek flushing as she spoke:

"You saw Lochisla yesterday. Was he changed?"

Hyacinth started, and the blood rushed to her brow; but her cousin's eager glance and earnest manner reassured her. She answered almost immediately:

"Changed from what I knew him? Oh, no."

"Bah!—changed from—Stay, I forgot—you

did not know him eleven years ago. I am foolish; but to you he is unchanged?"

"Yes; but why ask? Why speak of him, Gwendolen?" Hyacinth turned aside in pain and fear. She marvelled that, believing what her cousin did of Lochisla, his name should ever pass her lips.

"You wonder that I can speak of him?" said Gwendolen; "tis a lack of dignity, you think? Well, so be it; but when you have loved, you will understand me better. Blame me if you choose—but I must unburden myself to someone, and at home I can find no sympathy. I am pent up in myself. I can trust you; if you cannot sympathise, you can pity and forbear, and you will not betray me. We know sometimes by instinct those we can trust, and I can trust you."

"You can indeed, Gwendolen." With tears in her eyes, Hyacinth kissed the hand that held hers.

Gwendolen went on in the same manner:

"He loved me then—he never denied it! And after ten years of exile, he comes back to England—comes to this place. I do not speak of this time—he may have come partly, at least, to see you; but he was here months ago, before he knew you would be with us—"

"Gwendolen"—interrupted Hyacinth, and paused.

"Go on—what would you say?"

"No, no, I should not have spoken."

"Why not? what would you say, I ask again?"

"You cannot mean—you do not—that if Count Cameron sought you again, you would forgive—you—do you not love him still?"

"Love him!" Gwendolen dropped the hand she held and rose to her feet with a passionate gesture. "I hate—despise him! and yet—yet he is mine; and what if he loves me still? What if he sought me—sued for pardon—aye, on bended knee!" A fierce look of triumph flashed into the light eyes; "why should I refuse it?"

"Hush, oh hush!" Hyacinth covered her face in shame and pity. "You cannot know what you are saying!"

"I know too well. Love him! the man who trampled my life under his feet! No, but for that wrong, I would see him at mine."

Hyacinth rose to her feet. "To spurn him," she said, quietly, "as he spurned you?"

"No; he spurned, but I would forgive."

"Forgive such a wrong! and without even love! You said, too, just now that you hated him. How, then, can you forgive him?"

"You are a child, Hyacinth," said the other, passionately. "What can you know of these things? Have I not told you he is mine—perhaps loves me still!"

"Oh, Gwendolen!" Hyacinth said under her breath and turned away, clasping her hands.

Her heart beat with a pity that was all pain for the woman who forgot her own dignity; and yet it was an infinite relief to learn the certain truth that Gwendolen no longer loved Errol Cameron. But her words and manner were a significant commentary on Lochisla's assertion, that though her own love might be dead, she would little care to know another held the place that once was hers.

"Aye," Gwendolen repeated, not heeding her cousin's exclamation—"he is mine. Why, he dare not give his name to any other woman! He will be bold if he venture to enter the society which ten years ago ostracised him, and to-day, if it forgave him for his present fame, would not forget the past."

Were Gwendolen's words intended as a warning to Hyacinth? The girl drew back; she might have urged that even if Lochisla still loved the woman he had abandoned, he could not come to her again as a lover; nor could she, for her very name's sake, pardon him; but she feared to speak, to rouse active jealousy in Gwendolen's heart, and incur, perhaps, questions which could only be combated by falsehood.

She turned towards the entrance of the chapel, and Gwendolen made no movement to

stay her, but sank back on the bench again, clasping her hands on her knees.

Hyacinth paused; "I might go up to the tower now," she said, "I will not be long."

"As you like," Gwendolen answered, and Hyacinth's slight form passed out into the church. Gwendolen lifted her eyes and looked after the retreating figure.

"A child's love, no more," she muttered; "no more, or she must have betrayed it. But it may grow to be more. Why does he see her? why tamper with her peace? Ah! the air of this place stifles me!"

She rose up hastily, passed with a hurried step into the aisle of the church, and gaining one of the smaller doors opened it, and stepped out into the churchyard.

It was a secluded spot at the back of the church, where the grass grew long and rank, and fewer graves had flowers on them, as though those tributes were given more to be seen by the living than as offerings to the dead, and who would see them here?

The spotsuited Gwendolen's present humour. She sat down on a low gravestone, turning her back on the river, which flowed a hundred feet or more from her; and she pulled up the grass in handfuls, and scattered it over the grave and over her dress. Her mind was in a strange chaos just now. Even as a girl, when she had really loved the Earl of Lochisla, she had never been blind to the advantages of his wealth and high position; and now that fame had added greater lustre to his name, and time had diminished her own hopes of securing a position, still more important in her eyes had grown the accessories of rank and status and fortune. Besides, the shock that had fallen on her youth had tended to harden her character and to develop its least admirable traits; the bitter and abiding sense of a cruel injustice darkened for her the whole atmosphere of life. And while her heart was less deeply wounded than would have been the case with a loftier and more sensitive temperament, her pride was roused to full force; but it was a strange pride, not the superb pride which ignores the hand that has wounded it, but would rejoice rather to see that hand clasp her hand again as a suppliant—not as she had said to Hyacinth, to repel with scorn—but to forgive. Forgive, while she hated? Yes, for strong in the woman's soul was that feeling of possession which is more tardily yielded up by women than by men. Errol Cameron had been hers; no other should possess him. She cherished the idea—the hope—that he still loved her. She would have rejoiced to let the world know that after long years she had triumphed, that the man who had abandoned her was her lover still. This was to stoop low indeed; but lower still was the abasement of an almost mercenary ambition—the willingness to restore to favour a wealthy wooer. But to do Gwendolen justice this feeling was the least prominent in her mind, and was scarcely recognised by herself.

While she sat there wrapt in her own thoughts, a wicket in the fence, which divided the churchyard from the river bank, opened, and a tall man's figure passed through and—apparently intentionally, avoiding the more direct cut which led to the village—skirted the church, whereby he would reach a path that ran at the back of the village main-street or avenue.

But Gwendolen, where she sat, could not see the approaching intruder; neither could he see her; a projecting buttress, close to which she was, hid each from the other, and deadened the sound of his quick, light steps on the turf.

Errol Cameron's thoughts were not just now of his early love, save in that collateral sense in which his own and Hyacinth's future was influenced and controlled by the past, wherein Gwendolen had played so prominent a part; and he would certainly not have expected to meet her in a spot so secluded and out of the beaten track.

He passed from the deep shadow into the sunshine, and doing so instinctively raised

his eyes, hitherto—contrary to the usual observant habit of the soldier's life—bent on the ground; and in that second with a stifled and passionate exclamation he recoiled, as never had Cameron of Lochisla recoiled before cannon's mouth, or the onward rush of a thousand armed foes.

But this beautiful woman who stood only a few feet from him—for Gwendolen had turned sharply; and her look—her quick spring to her feet, and cry, spoke instant recognition—was to him a sight more terrible than had been a shape from the unseen world—more terrible than the ghost of a dead past. It was the living breathing witness against him—the victim of a wrong still living. Eleven years had changed her from lovely girl to superb woman, as they had changed him from joyous careless youth to grave stern manhood. But to her he had knelt with vows of love; her hand he had clasped, her brow he had kissed. And now, after the long years, he stood face to face with her once more—between them five yards of ground, but between their lives, broad and deep and rapid, the river of wrong—unpardonable, irredeemable.

Back on the souls of both in that breathless, speechless moment rushed the last meeting, the last parting—when her fair head had rested on his breast, and his lips had spoken words of love and hope. To-day his heart is full of another love; but yesterday another's heart was pressed to that heart—another's hand enclosed in his. The old love died years ago; and if, in one wild second, it flashed on her that he had seen her in this lonely spot, and had sought her, that quick recoil—the bitter pain expressed in look and mien—had dashed that hope to the ground; yet did not all hope perish.

The woman spoke first, slowly.

"So, Earl of Lochisla, we meet once more. Time has not changed either of us beyond recognition—outwardly at least. It has wrought great changes, it seems, in the Lord of Lochisla, crowning him with fame and—honour."

He stood before her uncovered in the sunshine, his head a little bent in the proud man's stern endurance of shame; in the steadfast resolve to bear all for and from the woman he had wronged. The keen sneer stabbed him like a knife. A swift flush crossed his dark face—a spasm of deeper pain for her sake. She had stooped from her womanhood to taunt him; she had betrayed what a woman's pride—a woman's delicacy—should have hidden; but, without looking up, he answered gently—

"I regret this meeting, Miss Stanhope; I did not seek it—it was pure accident. I can only apologize for an unwilling intrusion." He bowed as he spoke, and turned to move away, but Gwendolen's voice arrested his steps. He raised his eyes, and as they met her look that look startled him with a feeling akin to horror. What! did the girlish love still live in her heart, and was she willing that he should know it—willing to re-conquer and to forgive? No, no—he had surely misread her; her eyes had unconsciously uttered a language her lips would not endorse; but he paused at once.

"Stay, Lord Lochisla," Gwendolen had said, and she flushed under his momentary glance; then clenching her right hand tightly she went on: "I suppose I ought not to detain you; but I have some right to question you, though you may deny that right."

"I do not deny it."

"You place no limit," said Gwendolen, with hardly veiled sarcasm.

"Not on your right to question."

"I understand—but on your obligation to answer."

"Nay, I assume that you cannot ask what I must refuse to answer."

"Mere courtesies, Lord Lochisla," said Gwendolen, "are from your lips to me a mockery. It can only be the flimsiest substitute for a real respect when you stand here to utter it."

The Earl's eyes flashed, but he bit his lip and remained silent. The cruel words were

so true, and yet—though she knew it not—so unjust!

"You are silent," said Gwendolen, watching him, and her heart beat faster with delusive hopes. "Are you then weary of legitimate warfare, or having none to occupy you, do you seek diversity of amusement—shall I say? in striking again an enemy once already beaten to the ground? What!"—she was trembling from head to foot now with mingled emotions—"you feel my words. I can wound you. Your eye quails, your lips are white! Have you no answer? Are you brave only to meet armed men, and utter craven before a wounded woman? If you have one spark of truth or honour left, tell me why—with the wide world to choose from—you come to this place after eleven long years? Have I suffered too little yet? Do I need more chastening from the hand that smote me?"

"Gwendolen! spare yourself—not me!" The words broke from him in the anguish of his pain. Was it this woman he had loved—to whom he would have given his life?—this woman who in her blighting scorn was a suppliant for his love? for how could he fail to hear through all the passion of a sincere resentment the cry of a wounded heart appealing to him, seeking to win him back "to a broken trust."

"Spare myself?" Gwendolen repeated hoarsely. "Aye, you are careful for woman's honour who yourselves have none; you are tender for womanhood's purity who have nothing of manhood's chivalry. It was a light thing to you to love; and break a plighted faith; you could snap like a thread a tie that for some reason had grown irksome; and for you there was honour and renown to be gained—all that life can give; for me the woman's part—to endure; shame, disgrace, reproach, and all the bitterness of a love trampled to the earth, yet—" she faltered and turned aside, wringing her clasped hands, "yet living still."

While Gwendolen spoke the habitual pallor of Lochisla's face had deepened to an almost deathly hue, and for a moment after she had ceased he remained silent; but when he spoke again it was with exceeding gentleness.

"It was no light thing to me to break a plighted faith; and all that I have won of a soldier's renown cannot blot out the stain of dishonour on my name. It is just, I know, that I should suffer, and to that decree I bow. From you—from the world—I deserve no mercy, and I ask none. Would that I could undo the wrong done! but that can never be. You ask me," he went on, as Gwendolen sank down on the tombstone from which she had risen, averting her face from him, "why I am here. You can hardly in a calmer moment believe that I desire to give you pain, or am even careless of causing it. Heaven be my witness! Nay," he checked himself with a quick drawn breath, and again the crimson swept like a cloud over cheek and brow, "of what avail such affirmation? How should any word that I speak seem to you aught but a lie, unless its truth be obvious?"

Gwendolen sprang to her feet once more, stung to the quick—with true feminine inconsistency—that the Earl should take her at her word.

"How," she cried, passionately, "should I believe the word that the deed belies? Not careless of giving pain to me! Then why, I ask again, why are you here. Answer me!"

"I cannot!"

Gwendolen stood still, and looked at him. How widely divergent—as pole from pole—was the man in his outward seeming and his character. A man to be loved and trusted and obeyed; born to rule minds by the power of his own; to rule hearts by the nobility and sympathy of his heart.

"His brow a throne where honour may be crowned."

If ten years ago Errol Cameron had won love without seeking it, how much more now, with that beauty of form which had ever been conspicuous matured, and yet more enhanced by the higher beauty of ripened intellect, the

splendid perfection of rare and varied gifts? Scarcely did Gwendolen marvel that Hyacinth Vernon had been dazed and bewildered by the revelation of a base and dishonouring deed from this man; almost could Gwendolen have doubted the evidence of her own senses, of his own plea of guilt. Hope sprang up anew at his last words.

Even had the old love seemed to himself dead within him, might it not have stirred once more when his eyes rested on the woman to whom he had given it long ago? She was young still, lovely still—more lovely, many said, than in her girlhood. And, ah! to see that proud, stern man at her feet—to hear that soft voice, that had in it a deeper music than of old—pleading for forgiveness; to know that his heart was still in her power—his life in her hands!

Gwendolen moved one step nearer to the Earl.

"You cannot tell me," she said. "Is it because you fear—that—that—" Her flushed face was bowed; the next words were whispered, "the past can never be blotted out?"

"Hush! hush!" his voice was hoarse and quivering with pain. "Oh, Gwendolen, the past can never be blotted out! That which cut our lives asunder then must divide them still—and for ever. I believed that, long ago, you had torn from your heart all thought but of scorn for one who had justly forfeited the love he won only to wound it to death. Even now you heaped upon me reproaches that cannot consist with a desire to forgive the past."

Gwendolen lifted her head and drew back, and a wild fierce light leaped into her eyes.

"Was one word undeserved?" she said. "Ah, I see—I see all. Your love in dead—was dead when you swore that in parting from me you loved me still; and now you would have another love—"

"Hold!" interrupted Cameron, with a tone and look that great as her passion was, she instinctively obeyed. "I will not pretend to misunderstand you; the tie that bound me, that binds me still to Hyacinth Vernon, can never be closer. I have not sunk so low, Gwendolen, as to ask any woman to share a dishonoured name. I shall never know a home; no son of mine will inherit the lands that have come to me through twenty generations. If you desire vengeance, it is yours, indeed; the cup of retribution is full to the very brim. Do you suffer and I remain scathless? Is it nothing to me, whose fathers knew not what dishonour meant, to hear—and from a woman's lips—such words as you have spoken to me to-day, and to have to endure in silence—because I have no answer to give—because I cannot say, 'you wrong me; I am guiltless.' As woman's virtue, so is a man's honour: the fame my sword has won me is but a veneer which cannot hide the gaping wound nor stay its bleeding; the praises of my name are to me like bitter gibes; homage a mockery. I have courted death, but death spared me; to suffer still. Once more are you not avenged?"

"I am avenged; verily, I am avenged!" The words fell slowly between her clenched teeth, as she folded her arms on her bosom. "It is just that your life should be blasted. Love and honour were yours, and your own hand destroyed them. You cannot rear a green plant from ashes."

She turned away; there was a hard glitter in her eyes—a vivid flush on her fair cheek; the cruel sense of humiliation of a woman who had stooped from her dignity—stooped to the very dust—and in vain, added tenfold bitterness to her feelings and her words. She could have struck dead at her feet, at that moment, the man whom she had wildly hoped to see there a suppliant. And she had been the suppliant, wooing the lover who had so wronged her that his very name should scarce have passed her lips. She had given to him the right to retort scorn for scorn; and seeking his love had destroyed even respect—nay, given him cause to ask if the woman who could so forget her womanhood had been, after all, so deeply injured. It is only lofty natures that,

in the consciousness of wrong, seek no victim. Gwendolen hated the man for whose sake she had humiliated herself; and yet had he followed her as she turned away—had he uttered one pleading word—she would have given heed to him. The blended motives, not really dead—though she believed them so in her blind wrath—would have sprung to life again, and she would have been in truth in the power of the man she would have imagined her slave.

But Lochisla only looked on her a moment with a look in which there was no shadow of sternness or resentment, but only deepest compassion; and silently bowing his head, as if his heart gave acquiescence to the harsh truth she had spoken, he moved away among the graves; and Gwendolen, sinking down in the rank long grass, burst into a storm of passionate weeping.

CHAPTER XII.

BROTHER AND SISTER?

"GWENDOLEN! Gwendolen! what is the matter? Ah, you must not weep so. Look up, and speak to me!" So tender the musical voice—so sympathetic the touch of the soft hand. Gwendolen lifted herself and looked up in the beautiful face bending over her.

"Hyacinth," she said, in a vague bewildered way; then abruptly laying a sharp grip on the girl's wrist, "are you here by chance? do you know?"

"I know," said Hyacinth, gently, "that Count Cameron met you; I was on the tower, Gwendolen, and looking down I saw him crossing the churchyard, and I watched him, and then saw you and he met. I went away at once then, and only came out to you when I knew you were alone again, because I looked through the belfry window—the one on the other side of the tower, Gwendolen—and I caught a glimpse of Count Cameron among the trees."

"I never thought you would play the eaves-dropper, Hyacinth. Come back into the church for a little while. I cannot return home just yet, Hyacinth." As they passed together into the church again she said, "You will not speak of this to anyone?"

"To whom," replied the girl, surprised, "should I speak of it? Besides, what we come to know by chance is in the nature of a confidence."

"You have very exalted ideas of principle," said Gwendolen, with a faint smile, deepening into a sneer as she added, "Did you learn them from Count Cameron?"

"Ah! Gwendolen!" the girl's sensitive nature was shocked and wounded: "no, not from him."

"Oh, why not?" said Gwendolen, recklessly; "he is an honourable man, you know, the flower of chivalry, and to you a good friend—only a friend."

"Gwendolen, you are excited; I do not think you know what you are saying."

Hyacinth paused as she spoke, speaking quietly, but with some hauteur. Gwendolen stopped, too, and looked at her cousin.

"Hyacinth, forgive me. I hardly think I did know what I said just now; but I had no wish to pain you; only—no, another time," she added, abruptly, "I will not say now what is in my mind. Let us return home."

And for that day at any rate, and for many days yet to come, Gwendolen was silent as to what had passed between herself and Errol Cameron.

Louis came back in the evening, and with him he brought the horse he had bought for his cousin. Well had the young squire executed his commission; and Hyacinth was enraptured with the beautiful creature, whose great dark eyes—like her mistress's—flashed with blended fire and softness.

She seemed perfectly aware of the admiration she excited among the group gathered round her; but most pleased by the caresses of the graceful girl who lavished on her rich musical German in the sweetest of voices. Perhaps



[FACE TO FACE ONCE MORE.]

Mdlle. Lenore—so Hyacinth named her—did not understand the language of Schiller, but she understood every inflection of the human voice, and knew very well what caresses meant.

Hyacinth was quite able to judge of the points of a horse, and needed no one to tell her that Lenore was not a mere showy steed, but possessed all the qualities she seemed to have; and she thanked Louis with tears in her eyes for his "kindness."

"You must not thank me, Hyacinth," he said, "I have had my *guerdon* in your approval. That would have been enough if it had been the work of days and weeks to obtain what you wished."

"That is very prettily said, Louis, and perhaps you mean it because you have a good heart."

"I mean it, indeed, and not because I have a good heart—I am afraid I have not. You afford no test of the truth of its goodness."

"No," opening her great blue eyes; then she looked a little puzzled, and then laughed out, and ran off to get an apple for Lenore. Of course the witch knew that from the time she could toddle everyone about her liked to do her service; and in the camp, had she not been an idol from general to drummer? But somehow all this homage had left her with a strange kind of simplicity, and she thought people "very good" to take trouble for her; and then Louis was her cousin, which, in her idea, gave him a kind of brotherly air—a view of the situation which Louis would probably have failed to appreciate. However, it just now dawned upon Hyacinth that her cousin was in earnest in what he said. But then he was like all the rest; and having got her apple, or rather half-a-dozen, the girl bounded back to the stable-yard to bestow them upon Lenore.

It was not many hours—that is, the next morning—before Lenore was put into requisition, and Hyacinth—passionately fond of horse exercise, and an accomplished horsewoman—rode daily. Louis almost invariably accom-

panied her, sometimes Gwendolen—but Gwendolen could neither ride so far, nor so long, while Hyacinth and Louis scoured the country for miles; indeed the girl outran young Stanhope's capacity, for he was not strong, while she—he used to say, laughing—did not seem to know what fatigue meant.

These rides were dangerous pleasures for Louis Stanhope; but this did not occur to his young kinswoman. She treated him and felt towards him as if he had been her brother, and he had done and said nothing as yet to startle her out of that haven of rest.

Once or twice Louis tried to "sound" her about Errol; the first time she turned the matter off; the second time, she said quietly, "Do you know, Louis, I think you and I had best not talk about Count Cameron. We cannot altogether agree, and we might quarrel; that will not do. Now for a race to that oak-tree yonder," and she shook Lenore's rein free, set off, and won by five lengths. So ended Louis's "speering" with regard to Count Cameron. Yet the Count still remained at Falcon's Rest, and more than ten days had passed since Hyacinth first met him, and she had not seen him since.

"Hyacinth," said Louis, during one of their rides, "should you not like to go to London for the seas?"

"Are you going? Yes, I should like it very much."

"I knew you would; we were talking of it yesterday. We didn't go last season, but Gwendolen wants to be in town this year, so I think we shall be going shortly—in a week or ten days."

It flashed into Hyacinth's mind whether there was another motive also for this departure to town—a wish to separate her from Lochisla; knowing as they did, or believing, that he would not go into London society. But before she could answer Louis, her quick eye caught sight of a solitary horseman advancing along the lane—Cameron himself! and her heart bounded, and her blue eyes kindled.

Louis saw the Earl also the next moment, but he grew pale and set his teeth. It was impossible to avoid a meeting, for there was no open gate or turning near, and if there had been, Hyacinth would certainly not have availed herself of the means of evasion.

"There is your Uhlan Colonel, Hyacinth," said young Stanhope. "Do you want to stop and speak to him?"

"No more than a passing word, Louis. I am riding with you—and he will understand."

The gentleness of her answer rebuked Louis; he coloured, and rode on a little ahead. The Earl, as he approached, drew off to Hyacinth's side of the road. He glanced at Louis covertly, but offered no salute; while Louis, on his side, looked straight before him, ignoring the Earl's presence. But to Hyacinth Lochisla lifted his hat, and bent to the saddle bow, and would have ridden past, but the girl drew rein with a quick low utterance of his name, and a hand outstretched to him.

"One second," she said, as he clasped that hand closely in his own. "Will you be in the Dingle to-morrow morning at half-past six, and I will come to you?"

"But, my child—"

"Oh, the people will not think anything. I have ridden cut alone two or three times before breakfast. You will be there?"

"Is the question needed, sweetheart?"

Hyacinth coloured, smiled, and with a parting "Adieu" rode on after Louis.

And if Louis Stanhope could have foreseen what only a few weeks would bring, he would have chosen an eternal prison rather than the pleasures of a London season.

(To be continued.)

WHEN some people are boasting of their ancestry we are reminded of the story of Jerrold. A man told him that he was descended from Cardinal Wolsey. "Cardinal Wolsey?" was the sharp reply, "my dear sir, you must mean Linsey Woolsey."



["SHAME ON YOU," CRIED THE GIRL, "TO SPEAK OF MY DEAD FATHER LIKE THAT."]

NOVELETTE.]

SIR ORIEL'S WOOING.

CHAPTER I.

"IT IS FATE."

"So you mean to give up your wandering habits and settle down like a decent member of society," observed Ralph Fermor, as he sat in the smoking-room of the Falmouth Hotel, with a cigar between his fingers, and looked with admiring eyes at his old friend and companion, Sir Oriel Graystock.

"Yes," replied Sir Oriel, lazily, as he removed his cigar from his mouth; "a man gets tired of wandering about from pillar to post when he has reached my time of life, I shall be eight-and-twenty next birthday."

"An awful age to be sure; and I am one year older than you. But you are right—if a man does nothing before he is thirty he may consider that he has let the game of life slip through his fingers."

"Yes, I have thought of that," assented Sir Oriel; "and I am uncomfortably near thirty without having made a beginning; you at least have a profession."

"My profession is very much at your service in exchange for your fortune, old man; but I suppose, to begin with, you'll be taking unto yourself a wife?"

"Not if I know it," was the very emphatic reply. "I may be a fool, but I'm not such a fool as to slip my head into a matrimonial noose. I am having Graystock refurnished and redecored, and I mean to go in for the county at the next general election, that is if a law suit I have on hand doesn't go dead against me."

"A law suit!" echoed Lieutenant Fermor.

"Yes," was the almost curt reply; "my opponent is a woman, too. My lawyers tell me I am pretty sure to win."

"They think there is a doubt about it then," asked Fermor.

"There is always a doubt where the law or a

woman is concerned," was the brief answer; "but suppose we smoke outside, it will be more pleasant."

"Yes, you are right, but it is getting late, and I must be off to my ship. What do you propose doing with yourself to-morrow?"

"Among other things I want to go to Mylor Church; it is somewhere across the harbour, isn't it?"

"Yes, it's on the other side of Trefusis Point. I'll come ashore and go over with you in the morning if you like. You see, I'm almost as much a stranger here as you are. I only joined the ship yesterday week, and as yet I've seen very little of the neighbourhood, and nothing at all of the people."

"Well, come and breakfast with me, and then we'll take a boat. An odd fancy has haunted me for some time past; an unaccountable desire to see the grave of old David Killigrew, who is buried there."

"Is that all you are going for?"

"Yes; the old miser was nothing to me beyond being a distant relative, from whom I have inherited a considerable sum of money; but I have dreamed of him several times lately, and he has always seemed to be saying to me, 'Go to my grave in Mylor Churchyard.' The dream was repeated so often that at last I determined I would go; and that, in point of fact, is what brings me here."

"Well, it's an ill wind that blows nobody good," laughed Ralph Fermor, "and as I should not have seen you but for your dream, I'm very glad you had it, and I hope the injudicious suppers that produced it had no worse effect. Good-night."

Then the young men shook hands and parted, Lieutenant Fermor walking down to a small quay, where a boat manned by blue-jackets, was waiting to take him on board H.M.S. *Philomela* that was stationed in the harbour.

Sir Oriel returned to the hotel, and found a telegram awaiting him.

It was from his lawyer, and ran thus:—

"Defendant's solicitors intimate that their

client is willing to make terms. Would it not be wise, as you are in the neighbourhood, for you to see the lady herself."

"Confound the fellow; why should I see the lady? I'll see her and him—"

He did not say where, but it was evident that the place to which he would like to consign them was not what would be generally considered a desirable locality; and he was still grumbling half-audibly, when a man who was crossing the hall on the way to the door, looked at him, and with evident surprise, exclaimed—

"Sir Oriel Graystock, by Jupiter!"

The young baronet looked up quickly, the frown still upon his handsome countenance, but it disappeared as soon as he recognised the speaker, and he said cordially:

"Admiral Lanyon, how do you do; have you been staying here long?"

"I'm living in Falmouth," replied the elder man, shaking the baronet by the hand. "Here's my address, come and see me before you go away."

"I will," was the reply.

Then the two men shook hands again, and parted. The admiral being evidently in a hurry.

It was still early in the morning of the next day—being something between ten and eleven o'clock—when Sir Oriel and young Fermor walked down to the Market-quay, and engaged a boatman to take them round to Mylor Creek, telling him when they landed at the Coast-guard Station there to wait for them.

Mylor Church stands close to the water's edge, but the churchyard rises in so steep a slope on two sides of the building that some of the graves are higher than the roof of the church itself—a condition of things by no means uncommon in Cornwall. The situation is remarkably beautiful, and the churchyard is just what a country churchyard ought to be—well-kept, and plentifully planted with simple, fragrant flowers.

The sun this morning shines brilliantly, whole orchestras of birds sing sweetly in the

leafy boughs overhead, and gaudy peacock butterflies chase each other from blossom to blossom, as though life were one long joyous holiday.

Sir Oriel Graystock experienced no difficulty in finding the grave of old David Killigrew, since the monument upon it was one of the most conspicuous in the churchyard.

But as he stood looking upon the mass of polished granite that covered the last resting-place of his distant kinsman, the young baronet could not help wondering why he had come here.

It was not out of love for the memory of the dead man, because he had not seen him half-a-dozen times in his life; and though he owed part of his fortune to him, it had come rather because he was the representative of one branch of the family than from any personal goodwill on the part of the testator; and knowing this, Sir Oriel naturally felt that much gratitude ought not to be expected from him.

The large altar-like tomb of granite precluded the possibility of the grave being planted with flowers, but some loving hand had recently placed a wreath of fresh-gathered roses on the tomb, and both the young man wondered who could have cared enough about the dead man to bring and leave it there.

With something like a sigh, and with a feeling of disappointment, Sir Oriel turned away and began to look curiously about him.

Suddenly he gave his companion's arm a grip to put him on his guard and ensure silence; and then Ralph Fermor saw a woman, only a few yards distant from them, kneeling by the side of a tiny grave with a wreath of white rosebuds in her hand which she was placing lovingly and tenderly upon the cold earth which covered what had once been a fair human blossom.

The girl's face was turned towards the young men, though she was unconscious of their presence, and they could observe the beautifully chiselled regular features, the pure complexion, bright and fair as the roses and lilies it rivalled, and the clear fearless blue eyes, soft and tender now with emotion, but with great possibilities in them for the expression of scorn and anger.

They could see nothing of her height or figure as she thus knelt, but her bright brown hair escaping from its fastenings fell over her shoulders, and the hands with which she was arranging the flowers were small and beautifully shaped—though they were now very much sun-burned.

"Don't disturb her," Sir Oriel whispered, as he drew Fermor away.

But, though he put a greater distance between himself and the fair stranger, he still kept her well in sight, unwilling, as it seemed, to tear himself away from so fair a vision.

At length he saw the girl move as though she were about to rise, and feeling awkward at having watched her so intently, he abruptly turned away and went on to the spot to which Fermor had strolled—for it must for the sake of candour be admitted that the latter had not been so much impressed with the beauty of the fair stranger as had his usually far less susceptible companion.

"Some young mother mourning for her first-born," he thought, with mild sympathy, and he had turned quickly away, not wishing to intrude upon her grief.

But Sir Oriel Graystock had not been so unobservant as his friend and he had particularly noticed that the girl wore no ring, and he therefore concluded rightly enough that she was neither married nor engaged to be so.

He was still loitering among the tombs, keeping an earnest but distant watch on the girl whose face had impressed him as no other face had ever done, when he saw her rise to her feet, and he observed that she was tall and graceful and even somewhat stately in her air and carriage.

"She isn't so very young either," was his mental comment; "she must be one or two-and-twenty if she is a day. Why, what can she be doing there?"

This last question was occasioned by the young lady walking straight to David Killigrew's tomb; re-arranging the wreath that did not lie quite to her satisfaction, and then adding a few flowers which she had reserved from the smaller grave.

For a moment or two after her work was done she paused as though lost in thought or occupied in silent prayer, and then she turned away and slowly descended the sloping path leading to the water's edge.

"Who can she be?" was the question that rose in Sir Oriel's mind. "What could make her lay flowers on old David's tomb? Surely she cannot be the Kate Killigrew with whom I am at daggers drawn. The very woman with whom Farmer advises me to open negotiations in person."

Scarcely noticing his friend he followed the girl, keeping at a little distance behind, and he observed her go to a spot where a small boat was moored, and saying something to an old man who was loitering near. She with his assistance placed the empty basket in which she had carried the flowers into the boat, then got into it herself, and having arranged her sails began in a business-like way to row in the direction of the harbour.

"A strong-minded independent young woman, at any rate," laughed Fermor, as he watched her. "It is not very often that you see girls rowing about here alone."

"I suppose the work is too hard for them," responded Sir Oriel quietly, "but that young lady is by no means wanting in physical strength."

Then he signalled to their own boatman, and unobserved a mild protest from his friend, who would have loitered longer in the pretty spot, he took his seat, and told the man to row back to Falmouth.

"I suppose you don't know that lady?" he asked the man, indicating the fair oarswoman, who was some little distance ahead of them.

"No, sir, I don't know her name," was the reply, "though I've seen her about the harbour a good bit, and she's always in that same boat."

"Then it must be her own."

"Yes, sir, I s'pose it is," replied the man, who had not been as much interested in the lady as the baronet was.

"I wish you'd find out who the boat does belong to, and let me know this evening," said Sir Oriel. "Come up to the hotel after nine o'clock, and you'll get a crown for your pains."

Before the man could reply, however, an exclamation of alarm from the baronet, and an imperative order, "Pull for your life," made Fermor start, and the boatman turn, to see the girl's boat capsized, and its fair occupant struggling in the water.

"Get that rope ready, Ralph," said Sir Oriel briefly to his friend, while he himself rapidly threw off his coat and boots, and prepared to take to the water the moment they were near enough to the girl, who was just contriving to keep herself afloat, though evidently not without difficulty.

"Can you swim?" asked the lieutenant, briefly, as he obeyed the order.

"Yes, like a duck," was the reply.

"You'd best be careful of the currents round here, sir," advised the boatman. "That lady can swim well, or she'd have been swept under before now, but it's as much as she can do to hold her own. I don't think you need go in the water, sir, we'll be able to pick her up without."

But Sir Oriel Graystock paid no heed to the man's caution; he saw that the girl was distressed and weighted with her clothing; and though she had not lost her presence of mind, it was only too evident that she could not long continue the struggle.

As the boat neared her, the baronet sprang overboard, and with a few vigorous strokes reached her side.

"Don't be afraid," he said encouragingly, "you will be safe in a few minutes."

Then he helped to support her while the

boat was got alongside, and Fermor and the boatman assisted her to get into it.

"Thank you very much for coming to my rescue. I don't know how I came to upset my boat; I never did such a stupid thing before," said the girl with a frank smile as she looked at Sir Oriel. "And what a miserable plight we are both in," she went on, with a rueful expression of countenance; "I hope we shall neither of us take cold."

"I am in no danger," said the baronet, cheerfully, "and you must put on my coat, which is quite dry."

Here Bill Bray, the boatman, interposed by saying:

"We'd best look after the lady's boat, sir."

Then he heaved the sculls to Fermor and began to make his own boat tilt in a perilous manner in his efforts to reclaim the other one.

By the aid of a third boat, which came to their assistance at this point, the *Lady Kate* was turned on her heel, the sculls were picked up and a large shawl was offered the dripping girl—a loan she gladly accepted in preference to the coat, which she told Sir Oriel he had better resume.

Then, having taken the address of the lender of the shawl so that it might be sent back to its owner, they set off to row across the harbour, the baronet with one ear, the boatman with the other, towing the *Lady Kate* after them.

By desire of the girl the boat drew alongside of the small quay at the end of the town nearest the railway-station; and here it was quite evident to the young men that she was well known.

"I have had an accident," she said to a boatman, who sprang forward directly he saw her face. "Get me a fly; I can't walk up to the Grove in this plight."

Then she turned to Sir Oriel, and gracefully said:

"I am really very grateful for your kindness to me, and if you are living far from here, my aunt, I am sure, will be glad to offer you shelter while dry clothing can be obtained."

"Thank you, I have only to make my way to the hotel yonder; but I hope I may have the privilege of calling to learn that you are no worse for your involuntary bath."

"We shall be glad to see you," was the reply. "My name is Kate Killigrew, and I live at the Grove; anybody will show you the way."

"And my name is Oriel Graystock," he returned, almost diffidently; "I suppose I have the honour of being your cousin."

"Of course you have; and of being my only enemy," she responded, with amused surprise. "But we will sign a truce for to-day, at any rate. And as I am getting cold now, I will say good morning."

So saying, she bowed to both of the young men as they helped her into the fly, and she then was rapidly driven away.

"Has the lady far to go," asked the baronet as he turned to tip the boatman.

"No, sir, only up the hill; she'll be there in another five minutes," was the reply.

Then Sir Oriel and Ralph Fermor likewise got into a fly and were driven to the hotel.

"It is fate," was the young baronet's mental comment, as he thought of his singular meeting with the cousin whom he had so recently resolved to shun.

Then he said aloud—for he had dressed by this time, and he and the lieutenant were just about to sit down to luncheon:

"I suppose I must call, but it's rather awkward, as that lawuit I told you about is with the young lady herself."

"It is awkward, but you can send your card, with kind inquiries; or I will go as your deputy if you like," was the covertly mischievous reply.

"I can't slight the girl in that way," replied Sir Oriel shortly. "Having asked permission to call, of course, I must do so; but you'll call on your own account, won't you—and with me."

"Yes," was the slowly uttered reply. "I

suppose I may as well; she seems a nice jolly sort of girl, and one needn't like her the less for being an heiress."

Sir Oriel looked at his friend for a moment with a passing flash of jealousy, but it disappeared almost as quickly as it came, for Ralph Fermor did not look a formidable rival; and the baronet reflected with some satisfaction that the man who could speak of "that divine creature" as a "nice jolly sort of girl" could have very little good taste, and absolutely no sentiment.

It never occurred to Sir Oriel, however, that somebody else might have been in the field before himself.

CHAPTER II.

AT THE GROVE.

It was at four o'clock on the following afternoon that Sir Oriel Graystock, accompanied by his friend Fermor, presented himself at the Grove, and was shown into the presence of Miss Killigrew.

Many times during the past twenty-four hours had the young baronet rehearsed this meeting with his cousin.

He knew that the girl was virtually her own mistress, and that the old lady who lived with her, and whom she called aunt, was in point of fact a far-away cousin of her late mother.

He was in rather a comfortable frame of mind when he was shown into the drawing-room at the Grove, closely followed by Ralph Fermor.

"How do you do, Sir Oriel," said Kate Killigrew, rising from a chair in which she had been seated talking to a young man, and giving her hand frankly to the baronet. "It is quite evident you are no worse for yesterday's bath! How do you do, Mr. Fermor; let me introduce you to my aunt, Miss Martindale; to my friend, Mrs. Lanyon; and to my cousin, Theo Martindale."

The gentlemen bowed, and the baronet mentally wished Mr. Theo Martindale at the bottom of the sea; for a single glance at that young man made him somewhat rashly conclude that he was an "impudent puppy."

Ralph Fermor's verdict upon him was that he was a "tame cat," but neither of the young men had an opportunity at the moment of expressing these charitable sentiments; for old Miss Martindale had hardly had time to return their salutation and inform them that she was very deaf, before Mrs. Lanyon, to use Theo Martindale's phrase, "literally pounced upon the two newcomers."

Mrs. Lanyon was a widow of very uncertain age; she said she was seven-and-twenty, and no one was bold enough to contradict her; but how much more than seven-and-twenty she really was her friends were either too polite or too prudent to inquire.

"I am so glad to meet you, Sir Oriel," she said, gushing over the baronet with her most fascinating smile. "Kate has been describing to us how chivalrously you saved her from a watery grave. I can't tell you how grateful I feel to you, for Kate and I are devoted to each other. It was so romantic of you to be on the spot at the very moment—now, wasn't it?"

"It was fortunate for me," replied the baronet gravely; "but I cannot claim to have saved my cousin's life, for she could swim, and other help was close at hand."

"But she felt herself drowning!—didn't you, dear?" asked the widow, turning to Miss Killigrew.

"What did you say?" asked that young lady, feeling annoyed at Mrs. Lanyon's exaggeration.

"You were nearly being drowned, when Sir Oriel gallantly came to your assistance," was the more mildly-framed question.

"I was in the water, and he helped me out of it," was the matter-of-fact reply; then turning to Mr. Fermor she asked if he would like to go and look at her prize rose-tree.

Fermor replied in the affirmative; and then the young people went out into the garden,

leaving Mrs. Martindale to blissful repose in her armchair.

"Won't you have a bat, dear," asked Mrs. Lanyon nervously, as Kate took up a lined sunshade that stood in the hall to protect her uncovered head from the fierce rays of the sun.

"No, I never wear one in the garden," was the careless reply.

Then Miss Killigrew walked on, talking to Fermor as though she were greatly interested in his conversation.

"Oh, Sir Oriel, I must have a bat," said the widow, putting on her most helplessly infantine expression. "Would you mind waiting just one little moment; I shall be racked to death with neuralgia if I don't have my head covered."

Sir Oriel felt savage, though politeness forbade any expression of his feelings; and he would probably have been compelled to stand kicking his heels in the hall, waiting for a woman whom he had never seen before, and whom he never wished to see again—if Kate Killigrew—who knew the proclivities of her dear friend—had not at this moment turned round and asked:

"Aren't you coming with us, Sir Oriel? Mrs. Lanyon knows her way about the place, and she can easily follow us."

The young baronet at once seized the opportunity, and he resolved to fight very shy of the widow for the rest of his visit.

But what man could fight shy of Mrs. Lanyon when she had once made up her mind to monopolise his whole attention.

Mrs. Lanyon was setting her cap at Sir Oriel Graystock in a manner that was enough to take the breath away from any inexperienced youngster.

Sir Oriel was not an inexperienced youngster, however, and the fair widow would have to be very much more clever than Miss Killigrew gave her credit for being before she would succeed in making him her slave.

She was quite unconscious of this being a sin, to whom successive failures only gave a greater desire to succeed; and she now talked of the essays and stories she had written, and the music she had composed, as though her own sayings and doings must be the most interesting subjects that could possibly be mooted.

Kate summoned them to go into the house for five o'clock tea.

Miss Martindale was wide awake by the time they returned, and she began to talk to Sir Oriel, whom she chose to consider her own particular guest.

"You must come and dine with us to-morrow," she said, in her quaint old-fashioned way, "and you must make our house your home. There must be no ill-feeling between you and Kate, for you and she are the last representatives of two good old families that have intermarried till the interest of one should be the interest of the other. I want you two to be friends, and not to let any question of property come between you to make you enemies."

"I should be very sorry to be at enmity with my cousin," replied Sir Oriel, feeling more awkward than he had ever felt in his life before; "and I will come to dinner to-morrow with pleasure."

"What does he say, my dear?" asked the old lady, who was deaf, turning to Kate, whose voice she could always hear more easily than that of any other person.

"He says he will be good friends with us all; that he will come to dinner, and that he hopes you will give him a good one."

The baronet's face clearly showed that he had not been guilty of uttering the last part of the sentence; but Miss Martindale needed no such protest, knowing her niece so well as she did; and she smiled, shook her head threateningly at the delinquent, and was just inviting Ralph Fermor to favour them also with his company when the drawing-room door was thrown open, and a servant announced—

"Admiral Lanyon!"

Was it fancy; or did Ralph Fermor, when the name was uttered, see a change come

over Mrs. Lanyon's face that seemed for a moment to add a dozen years to her age?

He could not tell; if the change came it went away as rapidly as it appeared, and he was, at any rate, too much surprised himself to see Sir Oriel greet the new comer as an old friend, to observe how the widow became pale with anxiety, when the two men shook hands.

Theo Martindale saw her agitation, however, and he there and then resolved to cultivate the Admiral more than he had done hitherto.

CHAPTER III.

A BACHELOR'S PARTY.

ADMIRAL LANYON was one of those men who never seem to grow old.

Time, it is true, had whitened his hair, and blanched his beard, but it had not taken away the fresh bloom from his cheeks, nor the lustre from his eye; while his figure—though a trifle portly—was still well set up, and his movements were quick and easy, as though his muscles had not yet lost the elasticity of youth. The admiral was a widower, but he had lost his wife in the first year of his married life; and thus while he had not fallen into the rather slovenly habits that some married men contract, he had acquired a certain amount of gentle tenderness and ready sympathy that only contact with a pure-minded loving woman could impart to a generously receptive nature.

It was his only son, the offspring of this short year of wedded life, who had been the husband of Mrs. Lanyon, and this son had died three years after his own marriage.

Of the circumstances attending his death, I will not speak here, suffice it to say that they were both mysterious and painful.

With Katherine Killigrew, Admiral Lanyon was a great favourite, in addition to being an old friend, and she now shook hands with him almost affectionately, made him sit down by her side, and almost drove Sir Oriel into a fit of jealousy by the attention she paid to the old sailor.

Mrs. Lanyon was very polite to her father-in-law, but she did not "gush" over him; and he, for his part, just spoke to her as he came into the room, and then seemed altogether to forget her presence.

Whether this was accidental or intentional, Ralph Fermor was puzzled to decide.

Why he should care to decide was a question that he could not answer, for he certainly was not in love with the scheming widow.

But though he was not in love with her, she wholly puzzled, and half-fascinated him, while she likewise aroused his curiosity; and being a man with comparatively little to do, he found in her a certain amount of mental occupation in which he could take a lazy interest.

Afternoon tea could not last very long, however, and Sir Oriel soon rose to go.

Admiral Lanyon rose also.

"I was coming down to your hotel this evening to have a smoke with you," he said, "but if you are engaged to-night, I'll come to-morrow."

"Sir Oriel is coming here to dinner to-morrow, Admiral, and we want you to come too," here interposed Kate Killigrew, smilingly; "I was going to send round this evening to ask you."

The old man bowed gallantly as he replied, "I am always honoured when you invite me, *ma belle!*"

Then, with old-fashioned politeness, he kissed the girl's hand and turned to the young baronet, who said,—

"If you have no other engagement come on with me now."

The old man consented, and Lieutenant Fermor, who felt as though he should be something like the fifth wheel to a coach, remarked to Theodore Martindale,—

"You don't feel inclined for a stroll, I suppose?"

"Indeed I do," was the ready answer; "I was just thinking of going down to the beach." Then the gentlemen took their leave. Theo

Martindale making some low-toned remark to Kate about going for a walk.

The four gentlemen dined together, and had a pleasant rubber afterwards. Sir Oriel was left to himself and began to pace the room slowly and thoughtfully.

What a change had come over him since the morning of the previous day, and what an age he seemed to have lived since he and Fernor went over to Mylor church to look at the grave of a man who had left him a large addition to the very moderate fortune that had come to him through the death of his cousin, whom he had succeeded in the baronetcy!

He was thinking of all this now—thinking of the days when he was only possessed of a modest four hundred a year, when his uncle, Sir Wilbraham Graystock was alive, and his cousin Herbert about to be married to a great Cornish heiress.

How far away from him the Graystock estates and the title seemed then!

But death came, suddenly and swiftly.

The first to go was his uncle, who was found dead in his study.

And then his cousin's baby boy, a human blossom of a few months old, was taken.

The broken-hearted mother was the next, and her disconsolate husband was not long in following her; and thus it happened that before Oriel Graystock could be called to the Bar, for which profession he was studying, a sudden change of fortune came to him, and he went abroad; and it was during his absence from England that old David Killigrew, to whom he was related through his late mother, had died.

"It was strange, my dreaming so constantly of the old man, and then meeting her by his grave," he kept musing, as he paced restlessly about his room; then another thought occurred to him, and he exclaimed suddenly,—

"I wonder what child is buried there; it was quite a baby's grave that she was kneeling at?"

The question puzzled him, for he remembered that his cousin's appearance as she knelt arranging the flowers was such that he had for the moment taken her to be the mother of the child whose grave she tended so carefully. "Some little niece or nephew of her's must be buried there," he concluded at length; "but I will go over to Mylor in the morning and see. Fernor is on duty till the end of the day, and I really have nothing of any consequence to do."

Then he went to bed and dreamed that Mrs. Lanyon was marrying him against his will, and that his cousin Kate was sitting upon David Killigrew's tombstone, and encouraging the widow and laughing at him.

CHAPTER IV.

"THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE NEVER DID RUN SMOOTH."

In pursuance of his resolution made the previous night, Sir Oriel Graystock walked down to the market quay, and ordered the boatman, whom he had engaged for the same journey once before, to row him over to Mylor Church.

Ned Bray, the boatman, was in a talkative mood this morning, but his passenger was not at all inclined for conversation, and it was some little time before Sir Oriel roused himself to listen to the man, and this was not until he found he was talking about Kate Killigrew.

"She haven't been in her boat since Tuesday, when you helped her out of the water, sir," the man was saying; "for now she goes to Green Bank, and crosses over o' Flushing by the ferry-boat, and then she walks on to Mylor; 'tis just a stiffish little walk for a lady, but Miss Kate doesn't think nothing of it."

"You speak as though you knew a great deal about Miss Killigrew, and yet two days ago you didn't know her name," remarked the baronet, sharply.

"Ay, ay, sir, that's true enough," replied

the man, good-humouredly. "I knew lots about Kate Killigrew, of course; everybody hereabouts knows about her. But I've been away from Falmouth for a matter of seven years or more; and though I've seen her in her boat times enough since I came back, I didn't recognize her till I heard her name."

"Why don't you call her Miss Kate, or Miss Killigrew?" demanded the baronet, hotly.

"The lady is a relation of mine."

"It's out of no disrespect to her, sir," said the man, in an explanatory rather than an apologetic tone. "I don't's'pose there's a man, woman, or child, for miles round, that don't know of Miss Kate's goodness and charity, and that wouldn't think much more of you, sir, for being related to her."

"It's very kind of them, I'm sure," retorted the baronet, shortly.

But he felt an uncomfortable sensation of having been taken down himself, instead of having given Ned Bray a needful lesson in the way of respect for his social superiors.

Subsequent experience taught Sir Oriel the utter futility of trying to impress the working classes here with any special regard for wealth and station.

There was never wanting a certain polite, and courteous friendliness of manner; men would go out of their way to do him a little service, and never think of being paid for it, and if he offered them a gratuity they would look at it doubtfully, as if they would be disposed to return it, but for the fear of hurting his feelings.

But there was no servility, no cringing, no obsequiousness of manner or of speech; he was treated with a certain amount of consideration, as a guest and a stranger, in the county, but that there was any wide line of demarcation between him and themselves, was simply incomprehensible to the independent Cornish folk, the belief that one section of humanity was made of china and another of common delf, not having yet taken hold of their benighted understandings. Sir Oriel soon got over the unpleasant sensation, however, and in time he came to like and appreciate the unconscious assumption of cordial equality that he met with on every side.

But he has not learnt that lesson yet, and he has been silently admiring Pendennis Castle and the view of the town of Falmouth, built, as it is, in terraces one above the other, on the steep side of the hill which rises almost from the water's edge, and he has fallen into a train of pleasant thought when he wakes up to find himself at his destination.

Telling the man to wait for him, Sir Oriel sprang ashore and walked through the gate into the churchyard.

Without waiting to look about him he went straight to the spot where two days before he had first seen his cousin kneeling.

Early as it was in the morning, some one had been there before him, for already there were freshly-cut flowers placed upon the grave, and looking about he caught sight of Kate Killigrew, who was just leaving the churchyard by the principal entrance which lay in an exactly opposite direction to the gate by which he had entered.

She had just turned to give a parting glance at the graves, to which she made an almost daily pilgrimage, when she caught sight of her cousin, and the bright colour of her cheeks assumed for the moment a deeper hue.

To bow in acknowledgment of his lifted hat was of course necessary, but certainly she had not have hesitated as to whether she should turn back and go a step or two to meet him, or should go steadily on her way, as though he had not been there.

Sir Oriel did not hesitate for a moment; however, directly he recognised Kate Killigrew he made the best of his way towards her, his pleasure at meeting her, being much too strong to admit of delay.

"How do you do?" he asked, taking her hand in his own. "I scarcely hoped to find you here this morning," he went on, "though I confess I came early on the chance of doing

so. I want you to come with me to David Killigrew's grave; will you?"

"Yes," she replied, quietly; "I will go with you, if you like. I have just come from there."

"It is you then who put flowers upon his tomb?" he asked, knowing well what the answer would be.

"Of course it is; there is no one else here to do so."

"You were very fond of him?" he said gently, as they stood together by the old man's grave.

"Yes," she answered, steadily; "so fond of him that sooner than squabble over the estate he left me I will give it up to you if you covet it enough to take it."

"Oh no, Kate, don't think so meanly of me as that!" he cried, impetuously. "It is because I believed the old man had no legal right to will it away from me that I instructed my lawyers to commence an action. It was out of no disrespect to his memory, nor from any desire to rob you of what ought to be yours, believe me."

"Still, I will not fight about the estate, nor will I allow any lawyers to do so in my name," she said, resolutely; "if you believe the estate is yours, take it."

"That is preposterous; of course I can't do anything of the kind," he replied, in a vexed tone; "but don't let us talk about that at present. You knew my cousin David very intimately, didn't you?"

"He was like a father to me," was the low-toned reply; "and when he died I missed him as such. My own father died soon after I was born, and Mr. David Killigrew was my great uncle, you know."

"Yes, I know that, and he was a cousin of my mother's; but what I should really like to be able to define," he added, with a smile, "is the exact degree of relationship between you and me. There have been so many intermarriages that I think it would puzzle the whole College of Heralds to state it correctly. How pretty the flowers are on this little grave! I see it is under your care as well as the tomb of David Killigrew."

Kate knelt down to rearrange a fallen knot of flowers, and Sir Oriel was bending to look at the name on the stone when his cousin said:

"You know who lies here, of course?"

"No."

Then he read aloud, with unfeigned surprise: "Wilbraham Herbert Graystock, the only and dearly loved child of Sir Herbert Graystock and his wife Eleanor Graystock, who died May 8th, 187—, aged five months." "My poor little baby cousin," he exclaimed, with something like a gasp.

"And my nephew, you remember," said Kate, quietly; "my only sister's only child. The poor darling died while his parents were at the Grove, which at that time belonged to Eleanor. They buried him here, and I think the loss of her baby broke my sister's heart."

Sir Oriel made no reply, for he had an unpleasant recollection of having felt anything but grief on hearing of the death of the infant, who was to him no more than any other child, except that it was one of the barriers that stood between him and rank and wealth.

And yet Kate spoke of the poor baby as though its death were still regarded by herself as a great grief; and he had very little doubt but that she was right in her surmise, and that the loss of the child had really hastened the death of its mother, if not of both its parents.

The train of thought thus suggested was so sad that for a few minutes he could not speak, and it was Kate who broke the painful silence by saying:

"I come here two or three times a week to look after the flowers and bring fresh ones, and if anything keeps me away the sexton's daughter takes my place. But I must not stay any longer now; I am going to walk to Flushing, and you came by boat, didn't you?"

"Yes; may I not take you back in the boat?"

"No, thank you, I prefer walking," was the reply.

"Then you will let me accompany you, I hope; it cannot be very safe for a lady to be wandering along country roads alone."

"Oh, I am safe enough," she replied, with a laugh; "but you can come if you like."

They walked out of the churchyard, after dismissing Ned Bray, and were going towards the high road when Sir Oriel asked,—

"Isn't there some path or lane about here through which we can get near the water, and walk round Trefusis Point. The soft turf would be so much more pleasant than the dusty road."

"Yes; but it would be so very much farther round," responded Kate with a smile. However we will go that way if you wish it."

"I should like to try it, unless it will tire you too much," was the answer.

"Oh, nothing tires me," she replied, carelessly; and then she led the way in the direction he wished to go.

They were very silent during the long walk that lay for part of the way between the cornfields and by sea, and then skirted the dense plantations of Trefusis. There was hardly a sound to break the stillness of the air, except the low murmur of the wavelets breaking on the rocks below, and Kate felt inclined to give her newly-discovered cousin the credit for being a particularly stupid companion, for he had persuaded her to come nearly a couple of miles out of her way for the mere pleasure, it would seem, of walking dumbly by her side. At length she said,—

"This is a very long way round, but we are not far from Flushing now."

"And you are tired!" he exclaimed, with sudden self-reproach; "how thoughtless of me. Do let us sit down for a few minutes; here is the trunk of a tree that looks as if it had been felled on purpose for us, and the place is beautifully shaded."

"I am not in the least tired," said Kate, with just the least sign of hesitation in her manner rather than her tone. "Are you?" she added, looking frankly at him.

"Yes, a little," he replied; but there was something in the tender, almost pleading look in his eyes that made Kate Killigrew's heart throb as it had never throbbed before, and the very unusual sensation made her more yielding than she might otherwise have been.

So she allowed her cousin to take her hand and lead her to a seat on the felled oak, and she did not reprove him, nor snatch her hand from his clasp, even though he retained it longer than was altogether necessary, and certainly held it as tightly as politeness would allow him to do.

Possibly, however, she did not observe it; for some strange feeling, for which she could not in any way account, had come over her and seemed to hold her almost spell bound, so much so, indeed, that when Sir Oriel threw himself to rest on the grass at her feet, and gently pressed her fair hand to his lips, she never thought of resenting it, though she started the next moment as though she had been stung, as Mrs. Lanyon's voice close behind her was heard saying—

"Oh, Kate, how you have frightened me; you have been so long that I thought you must be lost or drowned, or tossed by a mad bull; or—or that something dreadful had happened. Dear me; I am afraid I am going to faint; Sir Oriel—" She gasped and began to reel, then gracefully sank upon the sloping grass bank, taking very good care not to hurt herself as she fell.

But Sir Oriel Graystock was in much too great a rage at having his wooing thus rudely interrupted to be taken in by the widow's transparent pretences, and he made no attempt to rush to her aid, though he had been so startled at her sudden appearance that he had sprung to his feet with a muttered imprecation, and now stood coldly staring at her.

Finding that she was not getting any sympathy, and knowing that she could not easily faint away altogether, Mrs. Lanyon pretended to rally by a supreme effort of will, and then she began again to utter her string of reproaches.

"I was waiting for you by the fens, and wa-

beginning to feel sure you were killed, when somebody from Mylor said they had seen you set out to walk round the point with a gentleman; but you know, dear, I couldn't quite believe them, and I was so terribly anxious that I came over to look for you; indeed, Kate, you ought to have let me come with you this morning."

"You know I never let you come with me to Mylor churchyard," said Miss Killigrew, angrily; "and I confess I do not understand why you are making such a fuss to-day. I am not later now than I have often been before!"

"But, dear Kate, you forget the narrow escape you had on Tuesday," returned the widow, applying her handkerchief to her eyes; "and when I knew you were over here with Sir Oriel, I felt sure you must have met with some dreadful accident."

"I understood you to say, just now, that you didn't believe Miss Killigrew was here," interposed the young man, frowning savagely.

"Oh dear no, Sir Oriel—oh, dear me, how cruel you both are to me, and it was only love for dear Kate that made me so nervous about her. I could not imagine how you and she had met, and I felt sure you must have rescued her from some danger."

And the baffled widow began to cry like a big school-girl.

But a school-girl would certainly be young, and she might be graceful, and Mrs. Lanyon at the present moment was neither; and Sir Oriel was too thoroughly exasperated to let any feeling of gallantry rise uppermost in his mind. So turning to his cousin, he said:

"Perhaps, as Mrs. Lanyon has been so very anxious about us, and she has imparted her anxiety to other people, we may as well hasten to satisfy our friends that we are very well able to take care of ourselves."

"Yes, perhaps we had," was the reply.

Then the cousins walked on side by side, while Mrs. Lanyon scrambled to her feet and followed them.

"I have overdone it this time," was the bitter thought that filled her heart. "Kate never looked so coldly at me before, and I do believe that, despite all the haste I made, he has proposed to her."

Very few words were uttered between them till they reached the ferry boat, when, seeing the number of market people in it, Sir Oriel called for another boat, and told the man to row them over to the market quay.

Here they got out, and walking up the principal street they reached the post-office just as Theo Martindale and Admiral Lanyon came out of the door, their faces beaming with pleasure and mischief.

The glowing faces of the trio somewhat sobered the two men, while the meeting with their friends made Sir Oriel and Kate try to look less annoyed than they still felt.

A few words of greeting passed between them; and then, as they neared the church steps, Kate handed out her hand to Sir Oriel, saying:

"We shall see you to dinner, and you, too, Admiral; this is my nearest way; good-bye for the present."

Then the party divided, but as Theo Martindale turned to go with Kate, Mrs. Lanyon saw a glance pass between the young man and her other-in-law, which she would have given very much to have been able to interpret.

It was well that she could not do so, however; otherwise, even at this hour, she might have thwarted them.

CHAPTER V.

THE ADMIRAL'S LITTLE PLOT.

KATHERINE KILLIGREW was in the drawing-room dressed to receive her guests.

She was still in slight mourning, though David Killigrew had been dead much more than a year; but her black dress, composed of lace and satin, only made the pure whiteness of her complexion more vivid, while the beauty of her attire was enhanced by the white roses she wore in her dress and hair.

Miss Martindale was arrayed in a wonderful

garment of pink brocaded silk as stiff as a board; her pelerine and ruffles were of rare old lace, and she wore some quaint mosaic jewellery that seemed made to match the gorgeous hues of her costume.

It was in vain that Kate had tried times beyond number to induce the old lady to don for such occasions a less remarkable gown, to say nothing of its accessories; but Miss Martindale would wear her war-paint, and no consideration, short of a death in the family and consequent mourning, would induce her to attend a party in more sombre garments.

On the present occasion Kate looked at her aunt for a moment with a sigh, and then resigned herself to the inevitable.

Mrs. Lanyon's toilette for this evening had been very carefully studied, and was, without doubt, both youthful-looking and effective. Her dress was of pale blue lama, which clung to her tall slender figure, and was trimmed with frills and flouncings of ecru lace, while a ruffle of the same cream-coloured material with pearls plentifully sprinkled upon it hid the extreme bareness of her neck, and gave a certain amount of finish and style to the whole costume. Crimson roses fastened this ruffle in front, while crimson and yellow roses were arranged in her hair, and there could be no doubt that at first sight the widow looked younger than her fair hostess.

That her complexion would not bear a very strong light upon it went for nothing; she was careful not to expose it to any such test; and she was so well satisfied with her appearance altogether that she failed to observe Katherine's extreme coldness towards her.

Theo Martindale watched the widow curiously, and marked the expression of pleased satisfaction that came over her face every time she could take a good look at herself in a glass, and every now and then he smiled slyly, as if at some joke which he had all to himself.

But the young man was restless, almost to the extent of being fidgety.

Sir Oriel Graystock arrived, and Kate received him with more reserve than was usual to her.

Then came Lieutenant Fermor, and the young hostess made up in cordiality to him for her coldness to her cousin.

"We have had a great disappointment," she said, addressing Fermor, but glancing at Sir Oriel. "We hoped to have had the beautiful Miss Tregothan here to dinner and to spend a few days with us, and she has written to say she cannot come. I am so vexed; for she would have been invaluable at the picnic to-morrow, and she is always so lively that she would have kept us in good spirits as long as she stayed here."

"I don't like lively girls," said Sir Oriel quietly.

"Nor do I," chimed in Mrs. Lanyon. "Lively girls always seem to be striving for effect and trying to make other people appear dull. I like a girl to be sweet, and dignified, and modest, such as my own Ethel, dear child, will be when she grows up. You have never seen my chick, have you, Sir Oriel?"

The baronet made no reply; in fact, he had no time to do so, for at that moment the drawing-room door was flung wide open, and the footman announced Admiral and Miss Lanyon.

"Oh, mother dear, aren't you glad to see me?" and a tall stout girl of eighteen summers, who might have passed unquestioned for five-and-twenty, flung herself boisterously upon Mrs. Lanyon's breast, kissed her effusively, then turned to Kate Killigrew, who was listening to the Admiral's excuse for bringing his granddaughter with so little ceremony.

"Of course you brought her here," said Kate, with a cordial smile. "Where should Ethel be but with her mother; and how you must have grown," she added, turning to the girl, who was only two or three years her junior. "I thought you were quite a little thing."

"I haven't been a little thing for the last six or seven years," returned Miss Lanyon complacently; "but I was getting precious tired of being kept at school, I can tell you, and I think

I should have run away and joined an equestrian troupe next week if grandfather had not luckily telegraphed for me to come to him. It was fortunate he was in time, wasn't it?"

She looked about her frankly enough as she said this, as though her family rather than she had met with a piece of good luck, and there was nothing very surprising in the granddaughter of an Admiral, and the daughter of a clergyman thinking of circus life as an escape from the restrictions of school.

"It certainly was fortunate," replied Kate, gravely; "but dinner is served. Will you take my aunt, Sir Oriel? Theo, you will look after Miss Lanyon. Mr. Fermor and Mrs. Lanyon, will you precede us?" and so saying she herself took the admiral's arm, and thus the party trooped into the dining-room.

Mrs. Lanyon had not spoken since the entrance of her daughter, but she had no longer any need of pearl powder to whiten her complexion, for she was pale with mortification and livid with unspoken rage; while Sir Oriel Graystock, who had not been in the small plot, and had paid too little heed to the widow to remember whether she had one child or half a dozen, now said,—

"You were asking just now if I had seen your chicks, Mrs. Lanyon: how many have you?"

The woman thus addressed turned upon him such a look of hatred that the young man was startled, and Ethel Lanyon's rippling laughter did not dispel his annoyance as the girl broke in rather loudly,—

"Oh, my mother hasn't any other chick but me; to her intense disgust. I passed out of the fluffy stage ages ago. You would never have thought my mother had so old a daughter, would you?" she continued, addressing the baronet.

"I don't see why," replied Sir Oriel, quietly. "You are very much like your mother, except that you are rather less slender."

"That's not so pretty a compliment as our dancing master paid me the other day," said Ethel, with smiling self-complacency. "He said that Nature had been bountiful to me, and had showered upon me all her choicest gifts. Now wasn't that an elegant compliment?"

"Very," assented the baronet, with unruffled gravity.

"But I had a still more charming compliment paid me by the manager of the equestrian troupe I was thinking of joining," this gushing damsel continued. "He said—"

But Mrs. Lanyon could bear this no longer. The very presence of her daughter seemed like a personal wrong to her, while every word the girl uttered was like a cruel stab to her vanity and pride; for it showed how Ethel Lanyon must have been neglected when her highest ideals were dancing masters and circus managers.

"If you have nothing better to talk about than the compliments paid you by vulgar people, Ethel, you had better be silent," she said, with cold stern distinctness.

Ethel looked at her for a moment as the stern reproof fell upon her ears, then turned to Miss Martindale, who was looking at her rather severely, and very gracefully said to her,—

"I beg your pardon if I have been talking too much, but it is such a wonderful sensation to be really free from school, for the first time in my memory, that I am half wild with delight. I shall learn to behave myself better when I get more used to my freedom."

There was something so winning in the girl's open frankness and utter absence of conventionality that the old lady's heart softened towards her, while Kate, out of sheer good nature, hastened to say,—

"The change must be very great for you, and I can quite understand that you feel a little excited in consequence; by the way, we are all going to Kynance Cove to-morrow, and there will be plenty of room for you in the carriage, if you will go with us."

"Oh, thank you; I shall enjoy it so very much," was the eager reply.

And she would have said much more, but a glance at her grandfather's face warned her to be silent.

The admiral was beginning to realise the very serious responsibility he had incurred in telegraphing for his granddaughter on the mere impulse of the moment, and without first of all obtaining the consent of her mother. Not that Mrs. Lanyon would have given it, though it was plainly apparent from the girl's own story that she would inevitably have got herself into some serious scrape if she had been kept at school much longer. So the old sailor felt that he must make the best of the situation; but he resolved to give Ethel some very strict orders as to her behaviour for the future.

"Had you a very fatiguing journey?" asked Theo Martindale, in a comparatively low tone, as he observed that the girl by his side was becoming restless, and would certainly not be long without committing some fresh *gaucherie* or other unless somebody charitably interposed.

"Oh, no; it was very pleasant," she replied, in a louder tone than was necessary.

Then, observing that her mother darted a quick angry look at her, she asked Theo, in a more subdued voice:

"Do you always speak in whispers in this house?"

"We are not speaking in whispers," he replied, quietly; "but if we all raised our voices as—forgive me for making the remark—you did just now, it would make a dreadful noise, while in this tone we can all talk without any of us interfering with the comfort of the rest."

"Oh, I see," was the slowly uttered assent. Then in a kind of stage whisper that could be distinctly heard by every person at table, she asked:

"Will there be lots of fun in going to Kynance to-morrow?"

"I hope so," was the reply.

"We are going in a big *waggonette*, aren't we?" was the next question.

"Yes."

"I wonder if I might sit on the box and help to drive; do you think they would let me?"

"I wouldn't make the suggestion if I were you," said Theo in a low tone, but with a very solemn countenance.

"But why not; there is no harm in driving, is there? Oh, I should so like it. Do you know I believe I could drive tandem as well as any man?"

She said this in such an earnest tone of simple faith that Theo Martindale felt called upon to exercise all his self-control to prevent himself from screaming with laughter; while Mrs. Lanyon, who could not help overhearing her daughter's unlucky observations, was nearly beside herself with rage.

It certainly was mortifying for a woman, so close upon forty as she was, and yet who was so well preserved that but for her angry frowns she might have passed for five-and-twenty, to be suddenly confronted with this very mature and still more objectionable daughter.

Even Theo Martindale, who certainly did not love her, felt some compassion for the widow, and he tried to repress Miss Ethel's exuberance to the utmost extent of his power.

"What a time those unlucky governesses of her's must have had," he thought compassionately before the dinner was quite over; "and what a precious handful the admiral and her mother will have now."

At this point the signal was given for the ladies to rise from table and leave the room; but Ethel showed no inclination to stir.

Theo whispered a few words to her, but instead of instantly rising she said:

"But I don't want to go yet, I haven't finished my peach."

Then, seeing the blank look of serio-comic dismay on the young man's face, she turned to look at her grandfather, and little as she knew his countenance she saw that he was terribly annoyed with her. So she sprang to her feet, but instead of taking her discomfiture in silence as almost any other girl would have done, she

threw up her hands in an attitude of despair as she exclaimed:

"There! I've done something dreadful again. I know I have."

And so saying, she literally ran out of the room.

"This is awful!" groaned the admiral, wiping the perspiration from his hot forehead. "I had no idea she was such an uncivilized hoyden, or I think I should have left her at school for the rest of her days."

"Oh, she'll tone down in time," said Sir Oriel consolingly; "her mother will pretty quickly take her impulsive ways out of her."

"Mrs. Lanyon seemed to be utterly dumfounded at her daughter's arrival," observed Fermor; "and, for my part, I certainly was astonished to see a great girl-like that put in her appearance in such a character, for Mrs. Lanyon always gave me and everybody else the impression that her daughter was a mere child."

"Yes, that was a nice little piece of fiction that she kept up all along, and meant to keep up still," responded the admiral dryly; "and, I'm almost sorry that I interfered; but the girl had had so much of school that it suddenly occurred to me the other evening that I'd put a stop to it, and I sent for her without consulting her mother, and a nice hole I have got myself into, it seems. By Jove, what is that?"

He might well ask the question, for something like a scene, and that a very noisy one, was evidently taking place in the drawing-room.

CHAPTER VI.

"WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH SUCH A GIRL!"

"How dared you leave school without my permission?" demanded Mrs. Lanyon fiercely of her daughter, as the girl followed the other ladies into the drawing-room, her temper by no means unruffled.

"Law! ma, I'm not a child," retorted Ethel, singing herself lumpily into an arm-chair. "I should have left school of my own accord in a week or two if grandfather hadn't sent for me; but as he did telegraph for me to come, of course I came. I should have done so all the same if you had said I wasn't to."

And Miss Ethel Lanyon smiled as she made this statement, as though it were just the right and proper thing to say under the circumstances. Her mother could scarcely contain herself with fury, and she turned to Kate Killigrew, hoping to invoke her aid in enforcing her maternal authority.

But Miss Killigrew was deeply interested in a novel she had previously been reading, and old Miss Martindale had settled herself in her own particular arm-chair with a handkerchief thrown over her face, intent upon taking her customary "forty winks," before the gentlemen came in; and mother and daughter were thus tacitly left to "fight it out" without any assistance from outsiders.

"Your grandfather had no right to send for you without consulting me, and I shall insist upon your going back to school to-morrow morning," said Mrs. Lanyon, trying to speak with calmness and authority.

"You may insist upon what you like, mother mine, but I shan't go," was the coolly defiant response. "I've had quite enough of school, and I won't have any more of it, so I tell you. I am going to live with my grandfather, so I shan't be always with you to let people know how old you are. I dare say you are very sorry that I came into the world at all; but as I am here I mean to step as long as I can, and to make myself as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. Some girls would almost break their hearts because their mother had so little motherly love for them; but now I have seen you, ma, I'm not likely to do that."

The taunt stung Mrs. Lanyon, but it did not soften her.

She felt defeated and baffled; she knew, also, that she had made herself ridiculous; and though she could not retrieve the past she was determined not to patiently accept her altered

circumstances, for it was quite certain that with such a very much grown-up daughter she could no longer pass for a young woman.

"You are like your father," sneered the mother, malignantly; "insolent, ill-bred, and selfish to the last degree."

Before the words were well out of her mouth, however, she regretted she had uttered them, for her daughter was more like a good-natured savage than a well-disciplined bread-and-butter miss, such as modern boarding-schools produce; and the girl now sprang to her feet, tall and voluptuous in form, but with every limb and feature quivering with passionate indignation.

"Shame on you, mother!" she cried, vehemently; "shame on you to speak of my dead father like that. You who made his life miserable, you who disappointed his dearest hopes, you"—and from loud, passionate tones she dropped her voice to a threatening whisper as she hissed—"who, I have heard it hinted, helped to shorten his days."

She extended her hand with an accusing gesture as she uttered these last words; and Mrs. Lanyon, shrinking back in affright, glanced towards the door, and saw her father-in-law upon the threshold.

Her first impulse as her daughter spoke was to rush to the old man and upbraid him for the course he had taken; but when she saw that he must have heard what Ethel had said the mother threw up her arms, and, flinging herself upon a couch, began to sob and cry as though she were overcome with violent hysteria.

It was Kate Killigrew's turn to interfere now. She, the actual if not the nominal hostess, had put up with quite as much noise and annoyance as she felt inclined to submit to; and as she now quietly laid down her book she walked over to the widow's side, and said firmly though quietly,—

"You had better go to your own room, Mrs. Lanyon, until you feel calmer. I would not on any consideration have invited my cousin to dine here to-night if I could have supposed he would have to witness a scene like this."

Mrs. Lanyon pulled herself together as though she had been a piece of mechanism made to expand or contract at pleasure by simply touching a spring; and, hastily drying her eyes, she said in a low tone,—

"I am quite calm now; it shan't occur again, I promise you."

Then she went over to a distant corner of the long room and opening a large volume of engravings she soon became, to all appearances, completely absorbed in its contents.

As for Ethel Lanyon she threw off her tragic attitude almost as soon as Katherine spoke, and walking over to the piano she sat down and began to play.

Music was certainly not this young lady's forte, but she could play a rattling dance tune or a lively march, and anything at this moment was a welcome diversion to Kate, who perceived that the gentlemen had come hurriedly from the dining-room attracted by the noise occasioned by the quarrel between mother and daughter.

Being in the drawing-room they could not very well leave it again, and Theo Martindale with Ralph Fermor made their way to the piano while Sir Oriol took a chair by the side of Kate, and the admiral seated himself near old Miss Martindale.

Mrs. Lanyon was thus left alone to recover from her agitation, to learn to face the present, and to make up her mind as to what steps she should take for the future.

Theo left the piano after a while and sat down and watched the widow, who was trying very hard to regain a semblance of good temper, and to make the best of the situation.

"It's rather hard on her after all," thought the young fellow a few seconds later; "she didn't expect her uncompromising duckling, and she doesn't get on with her at all. I'll see if I can patch up something like a truce between them, and complete reconciliation may afterwards follow."

Then he took a cup of tea and carried it over to Mrs. Lanyon, and seating himself near her, said:

"You don't look very well this evening."
"No; how can I be well?" she asked plaintively. "Isn't it enough to break my heart to hear that girl, and to see her behave as she is doing?"

"Really, I must say I think you are taking a singular view of matters, Mrs. Lanyon," expostulated the young man; "Miss Lanyon is your daughter, I presume."

"Yes, unhappily—I wish she was not."
"That may be, but you cannot alter facts, and frankly I think she has something to complain of in having been kept at school so long, and I am afraid it was not a very well-chosen one."

"But what could I do?" asked the widow, helplessly. "I am not rich, and I have no house of my own, and—Ethel was no companion to me at any time, and now—oh, what shall I do with her?"

"I should imagine that the admiral intends his grand daughter to live with him," suggested Theo; "but whatever arrangements may be made, it is scarcely the time to discuss them now. I heard Kate expressing her doubts as to whether or not our little excursion can come off to-morrow. Of course, if you object to your daughter's presence, the proposed visit to Kynance may as well be given up at once."

"Oh, no; of course I must not let my sorrows interfere with the pleasure of others," said Mrs. Lanyon, with the sweet resignation of a martyr. "I must not think of myself; I must bear my own burden. I don't feel equal to talking to Kate on the subject myself; but will you assure her that there shall be nothing unpleasant said or done by me to-morrow."

"I will, and—if I may venture a suggestion—I think you could soon mould your daughter to be more like yourself if you were to have a little patience with her. I fear you must have been deceived as to the class and character of the school you sent her to."

"Yes; I am quite sure I was. I will try to follow your suggestion, Mr. Martindale. It is very kind of you to take so much interest in my daughter and me."

She drooped her eyelids as she spoke.
For the life of her she could not help coquetting with this man, whose admiration she had vainly sought to win; and upon whom, in spite of all her seeming failures, she was still ready to believe she had made some impression.

The very hope of conquest put her in a good temper; and, though she would have much preferred winning Sir Oriol to this comparatively poor man, still she was quite conscious of the fact that she had no time to lose; and though there might be as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it, she was beginning to fear lest her net when drawn in would always be empty.

So she smiled plaintively, and sighed, and allowed Theo Martindale to bring her a second cup of tea, and before he returned Ralph Fermor joined her, and she was seen talking with much animation to both of the young men, and she related some bright, witty little stories which Theo had certainly heard before; but she told them so well that he was quite content to listen to them as though they now fell upon his ears for the first time.

CHAPTER VII.

KYNANCE COVE.

At ten o'clock the next morning the brake with its four horses was at the door, and Kate Killigrew with her aunt and Mrs. Lanyon were just getting into it, attended by Sir Oriol Graystock, Ralph Fermor, and Theo Martindale when Admiral Lanyon and his granddaughter hurriedly came up the avenue that led to the house.

The old sailor's face was flushed with anger, for he was the soul of punctuality, and the party had been timed to start at half-past nine, would speak not a word of business

"Good morning, admiral, we were going to call at your house on our way to see if anything had happened to you," said Kate, kindly.

"It would have served us right if you had gone without us," said the old sailor, trying hard to clear the cloud of anger from his face. "But it's the first and the last time that I've been or shall be unpunctual. If I'd known that Ethel was going to take so long figuring before the glass I should have come away without her, and I'll do it the next time."

"I'm sure I haven't been so very long dressing," pouted Ethel. "I couldn't get ma's dress to fit me without so much pinning and management, and at school we girls always helped each other to dress, and I'd nobody this morning to help me."

Kate said nothing, for she felt annoyed at the whole party having been kept waiting by this girl's dilatoriness; but Mrs. Lanyon said quietly, though with some severity:

"You must learn to dress without help, and to dress in time Ethel, or, in future, you will certainly be left behind. You have no right to tax the good nature of other people as you have done this morning."

Ethel looked round for sympathy, and had she seen an encouraging smile upon any face she would at once have become rebellious.

But the gentlemen were talking to each other or to the ladies, and all except her mother carefully avoided looking at her, so there was no help for the girl but submission, and she said rather ungraciously,—

"Well, I'll try not to be late again."

Then she intimated her desire to ride on the front seat, but here again she was, as she termed it, "put down" by her mother, and she had, therefore, to get in behind with the rest of the ladies.

It is true that Sir Oriol and the admiral were both of them satisfied to be among the ladies while the two other men were on the box seat; but this was no consolation to Ethel, since the baronet had taken little or no notice of her on the previous night, and seemed even less inclined to devote himself to her amusement this morning, while her grandfather was still too angry with her to pay her much attention, and she was like her mother in one characteristic at least—she lingered after the notice of every man she met.

Now, Miss Ethel had, to use her own expression, been "pretty well sat upon" since she left the Grove on the previous evening, and she was never less disposed to efface herself than on the present occasion.

Directly they reached home her grandfather had talked to her seriously, and tried hard to impress her with a sense of the enormity of her conduct, and the absolute necessity of conciliating her mother.

The next morning, almost before she had opened her eyes, her mother came into her bedroom, and, though she showed every desire to be as kind and amiable as she could to her troublesome daughter, she lectured Ethel so severely about her behaviour that the girl, though she said little, felt strongly inclined to rebel, especially when assured that if she did not soon change for the better she would be sent away to school again.

However, the young lady's fast rising anger was dissipated for the time by the unexpected present of a very elegant costume that happened to be a little too large for Mrs. Lanyon herself, and that lady then returned to the Grove. After all this lecturing Ethel had used up the last grain of her grandfather's patience by the way in which she had kept him and his friends waiting for her, and his remarks on the subject had been more forcible than flattering.

The drive from Falmouth to Kynance affords some splendid views of fine scenery, and had Ethel been on the box seat she would have thoroughly enjoyed the ride, but, as it was, she chose to feel herself ill used and to look sulky while she watched Kate Killigrew, Sir Oriol Graystock, and her mother, who sat on the opposite seat to her.

There was plenty of room in the great carriage which was constructed to hold eight

persons comfortably and ten at a push, and as it was there were only six. Mrs. Lanyon had taken the further seat on one side with old Miss Martindale facing her, but she had counted upon having the baronet next to her, while she thought Kate or her own daughter would be on his other side.

In this, however, she was mistaken; the admiral took his seat next to Miss Martindale, Kate sat next to herself, Ethel sat by her grandfather and next the door, and Sir Oriel faced the school-girl and sat next to his cousin.

The consequence was that the widow could not talk to the baronet without leaning before Kate, who sat between them.

This was mortifying, but there was some compensation in the fact that Theo Martindale was on the box just above her, and she was able to keep up a kind of whispered flirtation with him.

"I am told by grandfather to model my manners and behaviour upon the same lines as my mother," reflected Ethel, bitterly, as she watched her parent; "and my mother's sole aim and object in life seems to be to get as much attention, and attract as much admiration as she can. Well, perhaps I can imitate her so far."

She was soon roused from this unpleasant frame of mind, however; for when they reached the wide desolate-looking waste called Goonhilly Down, the carriage was pulled up, while Theo Martindale alighted to gather some of the pretty white heath (*Erica vagans*) that is said to be the rarest and most beautiful of all our English heaths, and that grows only in this part of Cornwall.

He handed a large bunch into the carriage for general inspection, and then he selected a few sprays, and, to the widow's intense vexation, carried them round to her daughter, observing, as he handed them to the delighted girl,—

"The view from the box-seat is very much finer than you can get from where you are, Miss Lanyon; and as we are now quite out of sight of Mrs. Grundy, I will change seats with you, if you like."

Ethel glanced at Kate, who said, kindly,—

"You had better accept the offer. Mr. Fermor will take every care of you, I am sure."

Ethel needed no further encouragement, and in a few seconds she had clambered up to the box before Theo could help her.

"What a big untrained child she is," said Kate, in a low tone to Sir Oriel. "I do believe her faults are mostly on the surface, and that she really wishes to behave well."

"I am sure of it," assented the baronet, "and she will rapidly improve under your good influence. No amount of precept is equal to example."

Kate made no reply, but she blushed prettily at the implied compliment, and half turned away her head.

They were not very long in reaching Kynance Cove, one of the most wildly picturesque spots on the coast.

A steep path through a notch or chine in the serpentine cliffs led down to the shore; it was cumbered with huge broken fragments of the same beautiful rock—the remains, it is said, of a cave that had fallen in ages ago—and the difficulty of scrambling over these water-worn fragments was such that even the most active of the ladies required considerable assistance.

Through no intentional neglect upon the part of anyone—but partly because Ethel was attracting everybody's attention, more or less, by laughing merrily at the way in which they all rolled and stumbled over smooth and slipping pieces of serpentine not big enough to climb, out still too large to be lightly stepped over, and partly from the fact that old Miss Martindale required a good deal of help—it just happened that Mrs. Lanyon was left to take care of herself.

Under ordinary circumstances, she would have thought little or nothing of this, and would have taken capital care of her own ankles; but several things had, during the last

few days, conspired to make her particularly jealous of attention paid to others, and proportionately ready to consider any act of the kind an intentional slight to herself.

Unconscious of the smouldering rage they were leaving behind them, the rest of the party made their way blithely enough round the corner of the rock to the land-locked amphitheatre which they had come to visit, and that was now deserted by the waves.

The smooth yellow sand was firm and pleasant to walk upon, but the guide warned them they would not have much time to spare, for the tide would soon return, and while they thought themselves in perfect safety their retreat might be cut off by the incoming waters.

This caution filled Ethel with wild excitement; there was real danger, she was told, but she did not believe it.

As she looked at the mighty masses of black rock, veined with green and white, and splashed with red, polished by the almost perpetual friction of the waves, and now glistening in the sunlight like gigantic gems, she could not realize that the tide would soon leave little but their summits visible.

The others might waste their time in visiting the caves, but she made up her mind to gather wild asparagus from the very top of Asparagus Island itself, and pay a visit to the more easily accessible "Devil's Bellows" on her way.

Her wild spirits seemed to infect Theo Martindale, and he went scrambling up the rocks with her, getting over such rough, slippery places that Admiral Lanyon, old sailor as he was, more than once called out to warn them to be careful. But Ethel only laughed.

The towering black cliffs which lined the shore, and the fringe of white foam with which the restless waves continually adorned their feet, exercised a kind of fascination upon the emancipated school-girl—a fascination that was not altogether devoid of terror.

And, meanwhile, Kate Killigrew was thinking that this was the very happiest day of her life.

Many times before had she visited Kynance Cove, but never had its weird savage beauty struck her so forcibly as it did to-day.

This might have been because the weather was fine, and she was in exceptionally good spirits; or it might have been because Sir Oriel Graystock showed his deep and strong regard for her in so many ways, and in such an unmistakable manner.

That she liked her cousin Kate would have been very ready to admit, but she was not so well prepared to confess even to herself that she loved him.

For she had only known him personally a few days, and, though she had often heard of him, the impression left upon her mind by the reports that had reached her was that he was hard, overbearing, and tyrannical, besides being graspingly selfish and intensely mean.

That these reports had come from an unfriendly source, of course, she knew, and she could now judge for herself that most of the charges were unfounded; still the convictions of months cannot be eradicated in a day, and Kate was seriously alarmed at finding that she was very nearly in love with a man of whom such harsh things had been said.

When a girl admits to herself that she is very nearly in love with a man, we may be certain that she has not very far to go before she is quite so; while Sir Oriel himself was so far gone that only the dread of a refusal if he ventured to propose on so short an acquaintance kept him from speaking.

These "two lovers lost in a dream" failed to take much notice of what became of their friends; indeed, they seemed rather inclined to avoid the others, and they loitered about studying and admiring the wonderful beauties of the Cove from various points of view until one of the many tourists who were sight-seeing like themselves warned them that retreat would soon be cut off by the incoming tide.

"Don't let us lose any time," said Kate, nervously, as she saw that her cousin was still inclined to loiter. "You don't know how

treacherous the tide is here; while we think we are quite safe, and have plenty of time before us, we may be surrounded with deep water, and no boat can come to our help; indeed, I don't think there is a boat on the coast nearer than Polpeer."

"Yet I feel reluctant to leave this place," replied Sir Oriel, glancing in mute admiration at the wild beauty around him. "I seem to have an uncomfortable presentiment of evil, like a cold chill upon me; I hope that nothing disagreeable is going to happen. Do you believe in presentiments?"

"I believe that you and I will get a good drenching if we don't get drowned, unless you come on faster," said Kate, anxiously.

Then, seeing she was really in earnest, her cousin quickened his steps, and the couple managed to reach a place of safety with nothing more serious to complain of than a few splashes.

"I suppose the admiral or your aunt has met some friends," remarked Sir Oriel, as he and Kate scrambled up the steep incline from the Cove towards the spot which had been selected for the luncheon.

She glanced in the direction indicated, and saw a group of people composed of some of her own party, and some strangers who were in conversation with them, and she said carelessly:

"Yes; I wonder whom they have met—perhaps they are friends of mine, let us make haste and join them."

Sir Oriel sighed, but he had no reasonable objection to offer; and then the two cousins went on together to meet what might be an element of discord between them, and of danger to both of them.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN OLD LOVER.

"MISS KATE, how charmed I am that we meet once again," said a tall, handsome, military-looking man, as he took the young lady's hand, and held it in a firm, warm pressure.

"Max!" exclaimed Kate Killigrew, in much surprise, and not without some little agitation. "I—I am almost out of breath with climbing this steep cliff," she gasped; then, slowly recovering, she introduced the stranger to her cousin as Herr von Rubenstein.

The two men bowed as coldly and stiffly as if they had each swallowed a ramrod that refused to be digested, and then Kate asked:

"Who is up there with my aunt besides our own party?"

And she looked towards a group of people on the hill, for as yet she was still far from the top of the ascent, and the young German had come to meet her.

"There is my sister, Bertha, and her friend, Madame Myer, and there is the Count von Krutzen. We had come here to see the lovely scenery, and lo! whom should we find seated on a block of stones, very sad, and with tears in her eyes, but Mrs. Lanyon."

"But how came you to know Mrs. Lanyon?" asked Kate, in surprise. "I had never heard of her when I met you three years ago."

"Three years! is it so long?" Then he sighed. But as no answer was made to this remark he seemed to recollect himself, and said:

"Mrs. Lanyon! Ah, yes. I knew her in London a long time ago. She fancied she could write books, and she was studying German, and I met her again in Germany. One does so often meet people one knows. The world is so small one cannot lose one's self or one's friends."

"Then you found Mrs. Lanyon just now shedding tears," returned Kate, dryly. "Had she met with any misfortune?"

"No, I think not, except that she was alone," was the quiet reply; "but her tears soon gave place to smiles," he went on, with veiled irony. "And then her father came up to us, and I was introduced, and then I had the felicity of knowing that you were near me."

"Mrs. Lanyon's father-in-law you mean, I suppose?" said Kate, coldly.

Then she turned to Sir Oriol, and remarked,—

"Our party seems to be a good bit scattered. I hope none of them have been thoughtless enough to remain in the Cove until the tide overtook them."

"Surely not," responded her cousin.

But the bare suggestion made them turn to look back, and then an exclamation of terror escaped from Kate's lips.

"Look there!" she gasped; "look over on Asparagus Island; don't you see a man and a woman there!"

"Yes, I see them; they seem comfortable enough," replied Sir Oriol, with a smile.

"Comfortable!" groaned Kate, "the water must now be many feet deep at the place where we got splashed, and there they are sitting quite unconscious of their situation. What is to be done?"

"I don't see what can be done, unless they wait for the next tide," replied Sir Oriol, with a troubled look on his face. "The top of the island can never be covered with water?"

"I don't know, but I suppose not," was the doubtful reply; "and happily the sea is now comparatively calm. Ah! here comes Mr. Fermor, perhaps he can tell us what to do."

A few minutes later Ralph Fermor joined them.

He had been picking up some specimens of the beautifully veined serpentine, and had not observed what had become of the rest of his party till he recognized some of them on the hill.

Then he had set off to join them. Kate's question as to whether the great mass of rock in the centre would be covered by the tide made him turn to look at it.

"No," he replied, slowly; "I don't think it is ever quite covered, but Martindale and Miss Lanyon will be jolly miserable sitting up there without anything to eat or drink until the tide goes out again, but unless they get in a flurry, I should think they are safe enough; in any case, we can't help them."

Then he turned to continue the ascent, and the others followed him, observing that the couple on the island were still seated in a kind of natural hollow, their faces turned seaward, and to all appearances as much at their ease as if they had been seated in a bower of roses a hundred miles away from old Oceanus and his tides.

Kate and her cavaliers soon reached the summit of the Tor Balk, or "Tar Box," as the people about there call the lofty hill which bounds Kynance Cove on the side towards the Lizard, and there they found Admiral Lanyon, with the two ladies temporarily in his charge, and the German ladies and gentleman to whom his daughter-in-law had introduced them.

Kate Killigrew's greeting of Bertha von Rubenstein was friendly though not effusive, and she was calmly polite to the other two members of their party, to whom she was formally introduced.

She was about to speak of her anxiety with regard to the couple on the island when Miss Martindale said:

"My dear Kate, I have ordered the servants to get the luncheon ready at once, and I have just been telling Fraulein von Rubenstein that we shall be very glad if she and her friends will join us. I remembered that the Rubensteins were friends of yours at one time," she added in a lower tone.

Kate's face flushed painfully, but she bowed gracefully, intimating that the guests were welcome; but Sir Oriol Graystock could not help observing the start of surprise which Bertha von Rubenstein gave when the idea dawned upon her mind that Kate Killigrew was really the hostess on this occasion.

Her anxiety about Theo and Ethel was too great, however, to allow Kate to sit down quietly with her friends and she anxiously told the admiral and Mrs. Lanyon what troubled her. The old sailor was as much worried at what he saw as she herself was, but Ethel's mother, after looking coolly at her hopeful offspring through an opera glass, remarked:

"They'll get very hungry and very cold before they can join us, but they are safe enough if they don't lose their heads."

Then she turned to look at the luncheon which was being spread out upon the white cloth laid on the grass by the well-trained servants.

"Do you know we have been what you English call awfully sold by finding we could not get anything to drink that is more palatable than tea or lemonade at that shed down there which the good people do call a refreshment room," said Max von Rubenstein with a grimace as he caught sight of some golden-necked bottles in the hands of a servant.

"Oh, we knew what to expect," replied Kate; "and we always take care to be well-provisioned when we come here; but I do wish we could communicate with those two on the rocks. I am so much afraid that Miss Lanyon will get frightened and perhaps lose her presence of mind, and then we don't know what might happen."

"They do at last see the fix they are in," said Sir Oriol, who had been intently watching the couple, "and, by Jove, they mean to climb down the rock; what an absurd thing to do. They are perfectly safe where they are. Here Fermor, suppose we go down to the cove and ascertain if any help can be sent to them."

"All right," was the reply; and then the two young men set off at as rapid a pace as the nature of the ground would permit.

"Who is that gentleman?" asked Bertha von Rubenstein of Kate, as her eyes followed the young baronet.

"That is Sir Oriol Graystock, my cousin," was the reply.

"Ah; a pretty name; and he is rich, of course!" was the next question.

"He is not poor," was the reply, "but I don't think he is very rich."

Kate Killigrew's previous acquaintance with the Von Rubensteins was very simple.

Three years ago, when she was between eighteen and nineteen, she had spent several months in a small German town with a distant relative of her mother's.

At this time, her sister, who was several years older than herself, and Mr. David Killigrew, were both living; and Kate, instead of being a great heiress, was only possessed of a modest income of three hundred a year.

Here she met the Von Rubensteins, who lived in an old half-ruined castle, and here poor Kate learnt the first sad lesson of love.

At first all went smoothly enough, for Kate was believed to be much more wealthy than she really was, and Max was very genuinely in love with the fair English maiden; but when marriage came to be spoken of, and settlements were talked about, it became only too evident that the Von Rubensteins were bitterly disappointed; and Max, yielding to the representations of his family, broke off the engagement.

Immediately after this Kate returned to England, and then followed the death of her sister, in consequence of which she became possessed of the Grove; and the death of other relations, particularly of old David Killigrew, had made her the possessor of landed property and money to a very considerable amount; so that she was now an exceedingly wealthy woman.

Oddly enough, the Von Rubensteins had come across her name in connection with some mines; and as Max had failed to make a wealthy alliance in the interval, brother and sister both thought the chance of renewing the old engagement with Kate Killigrew might be worth trying.

There had been nothing unpleasant in the rupture between the young people beyond the disagreeable question of money, and as Max had seemed to yield to his family, and to be a victim to the prudence of his relatives rather than to his own cupidity, he and his sister felt that they could seek out Kate and renew her acquaintance with a very good grace.

They had not intended to call at the Grove for a day or two, trusting to some chance and

informal meeting, though they scarcely expected that meeting to come about so soon as it had done.

Moreover, they were still to a certain extent doubtful about Kate's actual position, for she might possess a few shares in mines, and she might live at the Grove, and yet her fortune might not be a large one; so they had meant to be very cautious and to make full inquiries before they took any decided step.

The general aspect of affairs, however, as far as money was concerned indicated clear sailing, and Kate's protestation carried no weight with it in Bertha von Rubenstein's mind.

Of course, Kate would protest that she had ceased to love Max; pride and self-esteem demanded that she should do so, and though Bertha felt vexed for the moment at Kate's retort that personal experience should have taught her that love was mortal, still she was not inclined to actively resent the remark. Indeed, she would have frankly admitted that the smallness of her dowry had been the cause of more than one proposed betrothment having fallen through.

But meanwhile Max has rejoined the group, and has seated himself by the side of Mrs. Lanyon, with whom, unluckily for himself, he had years ago, before he knew Kate, carried on something more than a flirtation, and now they had met again; the fair widow was evidently intent upon reasserting her right to the undivided devotion of her old admirer.

Max von Rubenstein, however, was only talking with the widow so that he might the more easily watch Kate Killigrew's face, and he muttered under his breath something like an imprecation as he saw the glance with which the young heiress greeted Sir Oriol as he came up to her and said:

"I have made inquiries in the Cove and they say that nothing can be done at present to help Martindale and Miss Lanyon. They have sent a man to Polpeer for a boat, and at a certain state of the tide some of the people seem to think it may be possible to take them off, but most of the natives advise that they shall be left where they are until the tide goes down again."

"And serve them right, too," here interposed Mrs. Lanyon. "I hope Mr. Martindale will know better in future than to yield to that girl's mad love of excitement."

"Really, Mrs. Lanyon, if I were Ethel's mother I should be too anxious about her safety to think of finding fault with her at such a moment," said old Miss Martindale severely.

"Her mother!" echoed Bertha, who, it is almost needless to observe hated the widow with a fine German spite. "Are you really the mother of that young lady yonder, Mrs. Lanyon?"

"Yes," was the mortified answer.

"Ah me; how you English women do wear," sighed the fair German; "I thought you were only a few years older than Max; and to think that you might be his mother!"

"Why don't you say his grandmother," retorted Mrs. Lanyon, almost fiercely.

But nobody took much notice of the widow's mortification; but at this moment Mr. Fermor called attention to the approach of the boat which had been sent for from Polpeer, and once more the younger gentlemen of the party had to descend to the Cove to render what help they could to the two unfortunate Crusoes on Asparagus Island.

The exclamation, "I will stay with the ladies," from Herr von Rubenstein brought a fierce frown to Sir Oriol's face and made him pause; but, before he had time to turn round Kate's clear, but rather sarcastic voice saying, "The ladies would very much rather you didn't, Max," set her cousin's mind at rest, and at the same time sent the young German down the hill with a flaming face, and at a rate of progress that soon carried him ahead of Ralph Fermor and Sir Oriol.

(To be concluded in our next.)

DURING the deluge Mr. Noah was in the habit of calling his wife an ark angel.

FACETIE.

INCOME-TAX.—An extravagant wife.

A CONTEMPORARY gives an account of a man who "blew out his brains after bidding his wife good-bye with a gun."

"Have you a mother-in-law?" asked a man of a disconsolate-looking person. "No," he replied; "but I have a father-in-law."

THE difference between a blonde and a locomotive is that one has a light head and the other has a headlight.

A NEWLY-MARRIED lady was telling another how nicely her husband could write. "Oh, you should just see some of his love-letters!"

"Yes, I know," was the freezing reply; "I've got a bushel of 'em in my trunk."

FOR PERSONS with "MASSIVE" JAWB.—A new chemical work contains an article on diazoothioamidoparatoheuesulphonic acid.

A MAN never realizes the beauties of this world till he drops two square inches of thoroughly buttered toast on the polished side of a highly-glazed clean shirt-front.

WHEN a member of a local corporation wanted his picture in a heroic attitude, the artist painted him in the act of refusing a drink.

AN Indian idol was recently found in Kansas. It was made of earthenware, was brown in colour, has a handle, and will hold two quarts.

EVERY man is fond of striking the nail on the head, but when it happens to be his finger nail, his enthusiasm becomes wild and incoherent.

It is a pitiful thing to hear a young lady say something tastes like moustache cosmetic, and then change colour, and try to look unconcerned and indifferent.

SMYTHING, whose wife frequently sings, "Oh, for a thousand tongues!" can't imagine what she wants with them, as he can hear her now all over a thirty-acre farm.

JOKE FOR WASH-DAY.—Mistress: "Why did you not answer the bell, Mary?" Mary: "Faith, mum, didn't ye tell me ye had a ring-machine?"

"Has the cooking book any pictures?" asked a young lady of a bookseller. "Not one," replied the dealer in books. "Why," exclaimed the witty miss, "What is the use of telling us how to make a dinner if you give us no plates?"

ON THE TROT.—Old Gent.: "Well, but, my good man, I could never buy a horse with legs like that." Gipsy Dealer: "Wot? Legs. Why, I thought you wanted a fast one, and you'll never see 'is legs when 'e gits a trotter."

SOPHIA, sentimentally: "I dearly love to listen to the ticking of a clock. It seems to me that a clock has a language of its own." Mr. Smart: "Yes, Sophia, the clock has a language—you might say, a dial-ect."

"SAMMY, my son, don't stand there scratching your head; stir your stumps, or you'll make no progress in life." "Why, father, I've heard you say the only way to get along in this world was to scratch ahead."

"WHERE are you going in such a hurry?" "Only back into the house a minute to change my pocket-book." "Change it?" "I had no idea the day was so hot. I started out with my sealskin pocket-book."

"WHAT kind of little boys go to heaven?" A lively four-year-old boy with kicking boots flourished his fist. "Well, you may answer," said the teacher. "Dead ones," the little fellow shouted to the full extent of his lungs.

SCIENTIFIC: "What did you say this conductor's name was?" "Glass—Mr. Glass." "Oh, no!" "But it is." "Impossible! It can't be." "And why not, pray?" "Because, sir, glass is a non-conductor."

A SWEET THING.—"Are you going to take that ugly pug-dog with you again, Carrie?"

asked Charles. "I really believe you take him simply to make yourself look prettier by the contrast." "Don't be jealous of poor Pug, Charlie," replied Carrie. "I'll take you some time when I want to look especially handsome."

"This is just my luck," said the gloomy man at the theatre. "Here's a performance going that's so bad it's agonizing to witness, and it's the first time in six months that I haven't had a woman with a bath-tub bat in front of me when I've been to the theatre."

HOSTESS: "Na, na, Tam, nae mair whuskey the day. Ye've had's muckle's ye can be trusted to 'airy." "Tam: 'Hout awa' wi' ye, wumman! It's no' me 'at'll 'airy it. The powny'll 'airy me an' the whuskey tae!"

JOHN BILLINGS thus explains the difference between the words "mistake" and "blunder." If a man puts down a poor umbrella and picks up a good one, it is a mistake; if he puts down a good umbrella and picks up a poor one, it is a blunder.

MACAULAY shaved very badly. He went to a barber once, and, after an easy shave, asked what he owed. The fellow, afraid of charging too little, replied, "Just what you generally give the man that shaves you, sir." "I generally give him two cuts on each cheek," said the historian.

NOT THREE SHEETS IN THE WIND!—A member of the Scotch School Board recently began an address to some children thus:—"Noo, ma bairns, we're a' like ships—some in the port, some out in mid-ocean, an' some near the haven. Ye're just leavin' the port; as for me, I'm half seas over."

"GENTLEMEN of the jury," said an Irish barrister, "it will be for you to say whether this defendant shall be allowed to come into court with unblushing footsteps, with the cloak of hypocrisy in his mouth, and draw three bullocks out of my client's pocket with impunity." The gentlemen of the jury said he shouldn't.

LITTLE Bobby, who talks slang for the whole family, said to his father the other night, "There are fixed stars, ain't there?" To which the father replied, "Yea, Bobby." And the young rascal asked, "Are they 'well fixed,' papa?"

AN Irish carriage driver made a very happy and characteristic reply the other day. A gentleman had replied to Pat's "Want a carriage, sir?" by saying, "No, I am able to walk;" when Pat rejoined, "May your honour be able, but seldom willing."

AN American tourist was visiting Naples, and saw Vesuvius during an eruption. "Have you anything like that in the New World?" was the question of an Italian spectator. "No," replied "one" here, "but I guess we have a mill-dam that would put it out in five minutes!"

A MYSTERY EXPLAINED.—"Lawrence, my dear," said his wife, wreathed in smiles. "I wish you had been to church this morning. Mr. Jones was very interesting, and when he prayed for the absent ones—" "Well, that accounts for it, then. I haven't caught such a string of fish for a year as I did this morning."

A young lady admitted to her mother that her beau had kissed her on the cheek. "And what did you do?" asked the old lady in a tone of indignation. "Mother," said the young lady, "I cannot tell an untruth. I turned the other cheek."

"Don't you think we ought to separate our husbands?" said a lady to her friend. "Do you not see how excited they have become? They are beginning to call each other 'ox' and 'ass' and all sorts of nasty things." "Oh, no!" was the calm reply. "Let them go on; they have known each other for more than twenty years, and ought to know what they are talking about."

"Yes," said the landlady, in speaking of a deceased lodger, "Yea, we shall miss him; for,

notwithstanding he had a touch of ferocity, and a temper that kindled with velocity, yet his verbosity, although inclined to ponderosity, and was never relieved by luminosity, often excited ferocity, in spite of his pomposity."

He was making a call, and they were talking of literature. "The Pilgrim's Progress," she remarked, "always seems to me painful." Of course you are familiar with Bunyan? "He said he had one on each foot, and they bothered him a good deal."

DEAN STANLEY used to say that, until his marriage, he had never really lived. A Lancashire man says that until his marriage he lived like a fighting-cock. His wife overheard him make this remark one day, and after that he lived more like a fighting-cock than ever.

"How beautiful is the language of flowers!" exclaimed Miss Posigush. "Which is your favourite flower, Mr. Smart?" "Corn-flour," said Smart, sententiously. Miss Posigush thinks there are some persons without a particle of sentiment in their souls.

An old woman who had been reading a fearful account of a man who had been murdered, met a neighbour, to whom she began telling the story, entering into particulars with horrible minuteness. "Whit paper was that in?" inquired the neighbour. "Nae paper at a'; it was a book it was in." "Toots—get awa' wi' ye! It's been a novel ye've been readin'." "Novel or no novel," said the old woman, "the man's lost his life one way."

A FORTUNE-TELLER was arrested in Paris, and carried before the Tribunal of Correctional Police. "You know how to read fortunes?" said the President, a man of great wit, but rather fond of a joke for a magistrate. "I do, sir," said the sorcerer. "In this case," said the President, "you know the judgment we intend to pronounce?" "Certainly." "What will happen to you?" "Nothing." "You are sure of that?" "Yes; you will acquit me." "Acquit you?" "There is no doubt about it." "Why?" "Because, sir, if it had been your intention to condemn me, you would not have added irony to misfortune." The President, disconcerted, turned to his brother judges, and the sorcerer was discharged.

BUTTERFLIES.

THE man who is all branes and no morality is simply a fast class demon.

Men of great genius often act like lunatics, but there never was one known to be insane yet—krazy people have fun branes.

The wittiest things ever said have surprised the one who said them as much as those who heard them.

He who repents of a sin is a stronger man than he who never committed it.

The mistakes of the head should be speedily corrected; those of the heart should be dealt with caustically.

When a woman's branes leaves her heart and goes to her head, she is as unsettled as a setting hen whose nest has been broken up.

A hypocrite is a phool; he could be honest for half the price it costs him to be dishonest.

The richest man is the one who gets the most out of the money he spends; the poorest is the one who gets the least.

A man may never have loved (a doubtful case), but having loved once, he never can forget it.

The principal lesson that religion teaches is humility, and it is the hardest one to learn. True love has a downcast eye and an impediment in its speech.

Women are angels or demons, just about as man makes them.

How many people do you think there are now in the world who, if they should die to-morrow, it would be impossible to fill their places? Not four.

There are coquets among men as often as among women, and it is plain to see them trap for each other.

JOHN BRILLIANT.

SOCIETY.

At Windsor Castle arrangements are shortly to be made for lighting portions of the palace with the electric light.

The Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise have returned to Quebec from New Brunswick, where they have been on a fishing excursion.

THE DUKE and DUCHESS OF ALBANY, although they have been living in retirement since their marriage, have won all hearts in the neighbourhood of Claremont by reason of their invariable kindness and hospitality. Last week they entertained 350 of the school children of Esher, and themselves helped to serve and amuse their visitors. After these little ones had been regaled plentifully on tea and eatables of all kinds, the Duchess presented each child with a suitable gift selected from a large variety of toys specially imported by her Royal Highness from Nuremberg.

At Lady Esme Gordon's dance the other night, through mistake, no band arrived. The Dowager Marchioness of Huntley, Countess of Lindsay, Lady Harlech, and others overcame the difficulty by taking turns at the piano, and the ball was a great success.

At the Archbishop of Canterbury's last garden party at Lambeth Palace much interest was excited by the appearance of a Maori chief, whose face was elaborately tattooed all over, while feathers composed his original head-dress.

MR. OSCAR WILDE is to be married. The bride expectant is Miss Howe, daughter of Mrs. Julia M. Howe, and one of the most beautiful of American belles. The marriage is not to take place until after the Japanese tour of the poet of beauty, and will in all probability be postponed until after the next lecturing tour in America.

The youngest daughter of Baron Meyer de Rothschild, who is betrothed to Prince Alexander of Wagram (grand nephew of Bernadotte), has, it is stated, announced her intention of embracing the Roman Catholic religion, which is that of her *fiancé*, on the day preceding her marriage.

On Monday, 24th July, at St. Peter's Church, Eaton-square, was solemnised the marriage of Lord Westbury with Lady Agatha Tollemache, youngest daughter of Lady Huntingtower and sister of the Earl of Dysart. The bride wore ivory-white tulle Duchesse, trimmed with Brussels lace and pearls; and over a veil of the same a wreath of natural orange flowers was fastened to the hair by diamond stars; she carried a bouquet of white flowers. The bridesmaids wore costumes of cream lace over pale pink satin; the skirt was edged with a box-plaiting, and the lace drapery was slightly drawn up on the left side and caught with a large bow and ends of pink satin; the bodice, pointed back and front, was covered with lace, and finished with a pink satin sash. They wore veils of the same lace as that on their dresses, and wreaths of pink flowers; a cluster of the same intermixed with maidenhair fern being fastened at their throats. Each wore a pearl arrow brooch, with the monogram of the bride and bridegroom in diamonds, surmounted by a coronet, and carried a bouquet of pink flowers. Lady Huntingtower wore ruby-striped satin, draped with old point lace, and bonnet to match. Lady Aveland's was a dress of pale green satin, with white bonnet beaded with pearls, trimmed with white feathers, and having black velvet strings; and the Hon. Evelyn Willoughby wore a flowered satin skirt, the bodice and drapery being of cream nun's cloth, much trimmed with lace, and looped here and there with flots of olive-green satin ribbon; a white bonnet completed a very graceful toilette. Soon after the breakfast the newly-wedded pair took their departure for Scotland. The presents were numerous, and included handsome jewellery and plate.

STATISTICS.

OUR TRADE.—The total value of exports and imports for 1881 was £694,105,264, as against £697,644,031 in 1880.

ESPERING FOREST.—Of the total acreage of the forest ascertained by the Commissioners in 1887—over 6,000 acres—5,531 acres have been purchased by the Corporation and are dedicated to the public, while about 532 acres remain enclosed, partly under conditions preventing building, and thus tending to enhance the value of the forest as an open space. The aggregate purchase money paid for the 5,531 acres, now public property, is £189,012. In addition £21,892 have been spent in extinguishing rights of lopping trees, with a view to prevent the disfigurement of the forest, and the hereditary Lord Warden of the forest has received £300 as compensation. A sum of £8,000 has been paid by the Corporation to secure the addition to the forest of the woods, ponds, and heronry of old Wanstead-park. Some £2,000 has been spent in printing the notes of proceedings during the arbitration, and £33,439 in law proceedings. The grand total of expense thus reached is £256,275. Although this seems a large sum, it will be found to represent a cost of less than £50 an acre.

GEMS.

KIND words are the bright flowers of earthly existence; use them, and especially around the fireside circle. They are the jewels beyond price, and powerful to heal the wounded heart and make the weighed-down spirit glad.

LIFE is like a game of chess; each one holds his rank according to his quality; but, when the game is over, kings, queens, knights and all are thrown into one common box.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

JAMS and JELLIES should be poured into the pots the moment they are taken off the fire, by which means a sort of skin forms upon the top in cooling, which, if not broken, will keep out the air.

FRIED TOMATOES.—Cut the tomatoes in slices without skinning, pepper and salt them; then sprinkle a little flour over them, and fry in butter until brown. Put them on a hot platter, and pour a little cream into the butter and juice. When boiling hot pour over the tomatoes. This dish is very nice served with birds.

COOKING SPINACH, ENGLISH AND FRENCH FASHION.—Pick the spinach carefully of weeds and stalks, and wash it thoroughly through several waters. About fourteen quarts of spinach will be sufficient for five or six persons. Put this quantity into a very large saucepan, with about half a pint of boiling water and three heaped teaspoonfuls of salt. Press it down frequently with a large spoon, that it may be done equally. In about ten minutes it will be perfectly tender; then drain it through a colander, pressing until quite dry, and chop it finely. Put it now into a small saucepan with an ounce of butter and a seasoning of pepper; stir the whole over a fire until quite hot; then put it on a hot dish, and garnish with sippets of toasted bread or slices of hard boiled eggs. Poached eggs are also frequently served with spinach, when they should be laid on the top. Lemon juice or white vinegar is considered an improvement. Either spinach or beet tops may be dressed with cream after the French fashion. Thus, after the spinach or the beet tops have been chopped and returned to the fire in a small saucepan with a little melted butter, add half a pint of cream, which has been previously boiled to prevent curdling, and simmer for five minutes; just before removing from the fire add a small teaspoonful of powdered sugar, and a very little grated nutmeg.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A Swiss watchmaker has made a watch which he claims will run several years without winding. A box containing two of his watches entrusted to the authorities of Vouvey on January 19, 1879, has recently been opened, and the watches were found going.

A CAPILARY museum is being formed at Tours by an industrious hairdresser, who is collecting the locks of celebrities for the veneration of our descendants. He points out that a lock of hair is one of the most enduring memorials, as it neither decays nor materially changes colour. Each tress, however small, is to be tied with gold thread and suspended in a glass case, its authenticity being guaranteed by the signature of the former owner, countersigned by the Tours Municipality to prevent deception.

WHAT IS A STRAWBERRY?—No one, we suppose, in these days of popular lectures and elementary handbooks, needs to be told that what we call the fruit of the strawberry is not the fruit, but the receptacle or cushion on which the fruit is placed, the fruit being in reality the hard little brown nuts which, if we condescend to notice them at all, we usually call seeds. But while the fruit remains—to ordinary ideas—unfruitlike, the receptacle becomes fleshy and juicy and red, and acquires the flavour which induced old Isaac Walton to say that God could without doubt have made a better berry, but equally without doubt never did.

WHAT THE THUMB DOES.—Have you noticed that when you want to take hold of anything—a bit of thread, we will say—that it is always the thumb who puts himself forward, and that he is always on one side by himself, while the rest of the fingers are on the other? If the thumb is not helping, nothing stops in your hand, and you don't know what to do with it. Try, by way of experiment, to carry your spoon to your mouth without putting your thumb to it, and you will see what a long time it will take you to get through with a poor little plateful of broth. The thumb is placed in such a manner on your hand that it can face each of the other fingers; one after the other or all together, as you please, and by this we are enabled to grasp, as with a pair of pincers, all objects, whether large or small. Our hands owe their perfection of usefulness to this happy arrangement, which has been bestowed on no other animal except the monkey, our nearest neighbour.

COMMON ERRORS.—What absurd mistakes we make in our dress and habits! Many people brush their teeth in the morning, ten or twelve hours after they have partaken of food; yet, clearly, the proper time to cleanse the teeth is after a meal, otherwise the operation is performed for beauty and not for cleansing the teeth. Then, our clothing is very absurd. In this climate, where throat and lung diseases are particularly prevalent, we expose the throat to the cold night air with but slight protection, while we cover it securely in the daytime. Women, who suffer from catarrhs and colds in the head, wear hats which are purely ornamental and afford no protection. They put warm clothing over the body and are generally insufficiently clad about the limbs. The weight of their clothes is on the hips instead of on the shoulders, which has a tendency to aggravate all the diseases peculiar to the sex. Instead of wearing shoes to protect the feet, high-heeled abominations are worn, which cripple the movements and plague the wearer with bunions and corns. Again, in the matter of food and sleep. In all the animal creation sleep follows feeding, and in warm countries people take a siesta after a meal; but the modern man and woman dash from the dinner table to the theatre, ball, or club, and bring all their powers of mind to bear at a time when the process of digestion and assimilation is going on.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

B. T. J.—The coat-of-arms of William, Prince of Orange, was an escutcheon quartered first and fourth with arms of England, three lions passant (walking), and France, three fleurs de lis, in quartering; second, arms of Scotland, and third, Irish arms. An inescutcheon, or small shield within the large one surmounting all the quarterings over corners, meeting at centre, containing a lion rampant (erect on his hind legs, as if for attack).

L. N.—If you intend to study the Italian language, it would be best to take a regular course under the tuition of some experienced teacher of that tongue. Many books are published which claim to teach Latin, Greek, French, German, and Italian, without a teacher; but in order to obtain a thorough knowledge of a language it is absolutely necessary that you should be taught by one who is thoroughly conversant with the subject. Before learning a language like Italian it would be better, in our opinion, to endeavour first to thoroughly master your native tongue—English.

DEW JUAN.—The simplest and most complete method of cleaning paint of which we are cognizant is the following:—Provide yourself with a quantity of the best whiting; put it on a plate, and have ready some clean warm water and a dannel rag, which dip into the water and squeeze nearly dry. Then take as much whiting as will adhere to it and apply to the painted surface, when a little rubbing will remove all traces of dirt. Afterwards wash the part well with clean water, rubbing it dry with a soft chamois. Paint cleaned in this manner looks as well as when first applied, without any injury to the most delicate colours.

BESS BROWNE.—The following are the distances, in round numbers, of the planets and planetoids from the sun: Mercury, 37,000,000 miles; Venus, 69,000,000 miles; the earth, 92,000,000 miles; Mars, 145,000,000 miles; Jupiter, 494,000,000 miles; Saturn, 906,000,000 miles; Uranus, 1,822,000,000 miles; and Neptune, 2,854,000,000 miles. The distance of the moon from the earth is 240,000 miles; and its diameter is 2,152 miles. The diameter of the planet Mercury is 2,950 miles; of Venus, 7,600 miles; the earth, 7,913 miles; Mars, 4,100 miles; Jupiter, 88,640 miles; Saturn, 75,000 miles; Uranus, 34,500 miles; Neptune, 37,500 miles; the sun, 882,000 miles.

R. W. B.—The mistake was the author's, and has been corrected as you have no doubt observed.

LIZZIE J.—We give the list you desire—the twelve months and the precious stones which are believed to influence them, and the significance of each stone. January, garnet, fidelity to promise; February, amethyst, control of the passions; March, bloodstone, courage and discretion; April, sapphire, repentance, also diamond, innocence; May, emerald, happiness; June, agate, long life and health; July, ruby, oblivion and grief; August, sardonyx, conjugal fidelity; September, chrysolite, preservation from folly; October, aqua marine, misfortune, and opal, hope; November, topaz, friendship; December, turquoise, success.

LOLLIE.—1. In making a present to a gentleman a lady should be governed by his tastes and surroundings. Some article of her own handiwork is preferable. 2. In the language of flowers, the tea rose means always love.

BELL.—1. The gentleman would most likely pronounce the prettiest woman to be the belle of the ball; while the ladies would probably give the palm to the one who was the best dressed. 2. An engagement is not usually attended with any ceremony. If a gentleman proposes to a lady, and she is inclined to accept him, she refers him to her father or guardian, to whom he explains his wishes, and is generally questioned about his means, &c. If the father or guardian considers him to be a suitable person to be engaged to his daughter or ward, permission is given, and the engagement ring is usually privately presented.

LITTLE WIFE.—We would advise, for your spare room, a blue ingrain carpet, with a low bedstead, square dressing-case, and cane-bottom chairs, of light maple. If there is an arm chair, it may be covered with a dainty pattern of blue cretonne. You should use a white counterpane and dress your dressing-case in white Swiss and blue. If you have Swiss or lace curtains, put a straight valance of the blue cretonne across the top. If you prefer walnut furniture, put matting and rugs on the floor and trim the room in red, using red Turkish towelling for the bed-spread, window valances and up-olstering of the chairs.

AMY.—Either a black kid slipper or a satin boot or slipper to match the dress is worn for dancing; slippers, however, are preferred. Your party dress should be short. All dancing dresses are now made short. Dresses for dinners and receptions, on the contrary, should have trains. Ball dresses have no sleeves—just a puff or fall of lace at most—and are low or square at the neck. While you are away you can use mitts to match your dress, instead of gloves. They are quite fashionable, and are preferable, in summer, to gloves, for those ladies who, like yourself, have reason to complain of the excessive perspiration of their hands.

JULIA.—The lilies

The rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears.
The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalm'd in tears.

are by Sir Walter Scott.

AGRA.—Apply bruised or macerated geranium leaves to the sore, changing the poultice twice daily, and after a few days wash frequently in a weak solution of carbolio acid. If the cut is clean and infested with a day's dressing of vasoline or of balsam of copaiba will be efficacious.

O. N. R.—If you will open tinned fruits, and vegetables (in particular) one hour previous to using, and turn the contents into an earthen dish, you will find it a great improvement. The "drizzle" to be will then have time to pass away. If your piece of beef weighs six pound, cook it for thirty minutes if you wish it rare, or one hour and a half if you wish it well done; that is, allow ten minutes to a pound for rare roast beef and fifteen minutes to a pound for roast beef well done. Dredge with flour, and baste often with the drippings.

BEAUTY.—We do not believe in the use of cosmetics and washes, and we would not, if we could, tell you how to use such nostrums so as not to show any of the changes that the years make. But if you would keep youthful in appearance get plenty of sleep and exercise, amiable and air, and do not indulge in any excesses of diet or dissipation. Passionate grief, moodiness, violent anger, and all strong feelings make ravages upon the face that age one more than years.

MILLIE.—1. You can get the iron-rust spots out of your "white Victoria lawn dress" by applying oxalic acid (the crystals) to the spots with the finger, having first dipped your finger in water. Expose the spots to the sun for a few hours, and then rinse them thoroughly in clear cold water. 2. Since you have the choice of your "pay," and want a leather bag, ask your friend to get you a square-cornered one. These are the newest for travelling bags. 3. Pour a quart of boiling water over half an ounce of loaf sugar, and half an ounce of cream of tartar (buy this at the drug store), and the yellow rind of a lemon. When this is cool, strain it and set it on the ice. You will find this an excellent summer drink, and it will cure the tendency to heat rash of which you complain.

A WOMAN'S HEART.

I don't pretend to understand
A woman's heart. I only know
It can be sweet, and kind, and true,
And can be like the snow.

When I was young, and strong, and gay,
When Fortune smiled in Life's bright morn,
My dainty little love was cold,
And laughed my vows to scorn.

Now, when I lie, a feeble wreck,
And proudly look another way,
She comes and cries: "I love you; let
Me be your wife, I pray!"

I don't pretend to understand
A woman's heart; but I will say,
I would not change my little wife
For yours, sir, any day!

A. D.

JENNIE DIVER.—Line your cabinet with dark maroon or olive-coloured satin or plush. Do not use anything with a great lustre upon it. Behind statues of Parian marble and groups of any pale-hued statuary arrange curtains or folds of some rich dark colour. You will be surprised to see how much more effectively statuary and statues will ornament your room when they are thrown into full relief by a background of dark drapery. In arranging your ornaments avoid arranging them in pairs, or in masses.

JENNY DRIVER.—Some persons are in the habit of dwelling upon, and greatly magnifying, every little injury they receive at the hands of others. They thus render themselves very disagreeable to those into whose care they are continually pouring their complaints; and at the same time greatly injure themselves in the estimation of such, whilst they are contributing very much to their own personal misery. How much better would it be were such persons to bury their little troubles; or, at least, to keep them entirely out of sight! It is to be presumed that they do not sufficiently reflect upon the true nature of their conduct, else they would certainly be more careful to avoid it than they are.

IN PAIN.—1. Nervous headache arises from disorder of the stomach, and particular attention should be paid to the diet and exercise. Rubbing the temples occasionally with a little ether will remove the pain. 2. For neuralgia, a sponge or a piece of flannel, dipped in boiling water and applied as hot as it can be borne over the site of the pain, will often allay its severity, or remove it altogether. If severe a medical man should be consulted.

MADAME.—To "cross the Rubicon" signifies the taking of an irremediable step—the adoption of some decisive measure from which it is impossible to draw back. It was a small river crossed by Julius Cæsar when he passed beyond his own territory, and burnt his boats, so that there was no possible escape if defeated.

BEATRICE.—Amelia means "lovable"; James, "deceitful"; Richard, "rich-hearted"; Peter, "a rock"; Susan, or Susanna, "a lily."

CENA.—The distress would be illegal, but pay the rent within the time named.

R. D. J.—There is nothing supernatural in the Will of the Wisp or Jack o' Lanterns sometimes seen late at night in swampy districts; but it is well for you when benighted you do not mistake them for lights from a cottage, and bend your steps towards them. These lights are produced by phosphuretted hydrogen gas, which rises from stagnant water, and probably originates in decaying animal matter.

JUKO.—In women who have an extremely small mouth, there is seldom observed that amiableness of disposition and character which is so frequently found in those who have a handsome mouth of moderate size. It would seem that too small a mouth indicates a weakness which degenerates into effacement. And even some females who have an ordinary mouth, when they are going to be affected, always begin by contracting that part.

ROSA F.—These are the crowned heads of Europe at the present writing:—Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and Empress of India; Francis Joseph I., Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary and Bohemia; Leopold II., King of Belgium; Christian IX., King of Denmark; William I., Emperor of Germany (and under Germany come Louis II., King of Bavaria; Albert, King of Saxony; and Charles, King of Wurtemberg); George I., King of Greece; William III., King of Holland; Humbert I., King of Italy; Don Luis I., King of Portugal; Charles I., King of Roumania; Alexander III., Emperor of Russia; Oscar II., King of Scandinavia (Sweden and Norway); Milan Oboroovitch IV., King of Serbia; Alphonso XII., King of Spain; Abdul Hamid II., Sultan of Turkey.

SORROW'S CROWN.—When a woman marries a man she descends to his rank, and does not elevate him to her own. Therefore your husband's relatives have become your equals, and you ought not to object to associate with them, as long as they are respectable and well-behaved. You have evidently displeased your husband, and much of his present conduct is occasioned by your own.

LIZZIE.—1. If you are the eldest unmarried daughter you should have "Miss Jones" engraved in script upon your visiting cards; if you have an elder sister not married, you should have "Miss Mary Jones." 2. A widow is not expected to return her calls until after one year. A lady who is in mourning for any other relative than a husband may return calls in six months' time. 3. It is as fashionable now-a-days to send wedding-cards and, indeed, all invitations, by post as by messenger.

DORA.—The flower language of the pink is: Carnation, woman's love; double red pink, pure and ardent love; single pink, pure love; white pink, ingenuousness, talent. The language of red clover is industry; of white clover, thought; of honeysuckle, generous and devoted affection. The rose has too many meanings to here quote—each kind and colour having its language. A full blown rose over two buds means secrecy, and moss rosebud confession of love. If the gentleman is not wholly to your taste, even though distantly related, treat his overtures as you deem best, not as he demands.

JESSIE R.—We cannot tell you of "any pure cure" for the whooping cough, but we can recommend a remedy which will greatly alleviate the disease, and if applied in the earlier stage will modify it so much that a child will suffer no more than from a simple cough and cold. Evaporate, slowly, over gas or a spirit lamp, a weak solution of carbolic acid in the room where the children who have the cough, or have been exposed to it, are asleep or at play. The room must be tightly closed, and the evaporation of the acid should continue for half-an-hour, twice a day, until all the symptoms of whooping are conquered.

NED F.—In accordance with the latest fashion decrees a gentleman does not pay for the wedding cards, nor have anything to do with the wedding arrangements, except to choose his best man, furnish the clergyman's fee, and the wedding ring, and one carriage in which himself and bride, after the ceremony, are driven to the station or to the place where they are to spend their honeymoon. Upon the morning of the wedding, he sends a bouquet to the bride and each bridesmaid, if they are to carry bouquets, and he may—if he chooses—send a gift to each bridesmaid upon the day previous to the wedding. Of course he makes a present to the bride.

ALLIE.—Gentlemen use black-edged stationery as long as they wear mourning. You had much better not set the young lady to correspond with you. As you are already engaged you owe it both to your betrothed and to the young lady in question not to win the latter's love. You might mean all right and yet drift into an acquaintance that would cause much sorrow and heart-burning.

LINDA.—The numbers are in print. Try this recipe to remove your sunburn and freckles, and to beautify the skin: put a quantity of elder flowers into a jug; pour boiling water on them; let the mixture stand for twenty-four hours, and strain through muslin. Wash the face with this every morning. We have no formal "fashion editor," but can give you all the necessary information about the dress for the happy event; when the time is near write us.

AMINA.—When your little girl wears a sacque or flannel suit let her wear with it a white mull tie, tucked or trimmed with lace at the ends. These are very stylish for little girls from three to twelve years old. They should be about a yard and an eighth long, and tied in a wide bow-knot the broad loops and broad ends being of equal length. Use piqué, coloured linen, flannels, Cheviots and plaid for your children's summer suits. A "valance," in dressmakers' parlance, means a wide, scant, straight ruffle or flounce.

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